



**ASEAN
CAMBODIA 2022**

**ASEAN A.C.T.:
Addressing Challenges Together**

ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM ANNUAL SECURITY OUTLOOK 2022

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FOREWORD

The last few years have been one of the most challenging times in our modern history for nations worldwide due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. Nevertheless, we have since been largely successful in gradually emerging out of the dire situation in terms of public health and safety and the unprecedented disruptions of lives. While a lot more needs to be done to fully recover from the multi-dimensional impacts of the pandemic, our region remains challenged by traditional and non-traditional security threats which have been complicated by rising geopolitical rivalries. Regional and global peace, security and stability are at stake, as deep-seated concerns and mistrust have escalated to open hostilities. In the current evolving regional security architecture, our enhanced cooperation and collaboration are crucial for us to be stronger and more resilient in navigating through these pressing challenges together.



Under the banner of “**ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together**”, Cambodia, as the Chair of ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 2022, has committed to consolidating efforts among all ARF participants in tackling the challenges facing the region thereby contributing to regional and global peace, security, and sustainable development for the shared benefits for all.

Since its establishment in 1994, the ARF has evolved into one of the most comprehensive frameworks for security dialogue and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. Despite the diversity of its membership, the ARF has served as an inclusive platform for all participants to engage in dialogues and consultations on issues of common concern and interest openly and constructively, the process of which helps promote mutual trust and confidence as well as cooperation among the participants.

Despite the multiple security challenges on the horizon, including the South China Sea issue, the Myanmar crisis, the development in the Korean Peninsula, the situation in Ukraine, and the tension in the cross-strait relations, the ARF participating countries managed to come together during the 29th ARF Meeting hosted by Cambodia in Phnom Penh on 5 August 2022 to discuss and debate relevant security issues and concerns in a frank and candid manner. In an effort to pave the way forward for the ARF process, the Meeting also adopted the ARF Statement to Promote Peace, Stability, and Prosperity through Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy, the ARF Statement on Reiterating Commitment to Preserve Southeast Asia as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), and the ARF Framework on Inclusive Processes for the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security Agendas in Confidence Building Measures, Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution.

The success of the 29th ARF very well reflects the importance of the Forum as a key platform to enhance mutual understanding, trust, solidarity and expand cooperation in addressing the increasingly complex challenges amidst rapidly-changing security dynamics. At this critical juncture, it is imperative that we continue to devote our utmost attention and efforts to strengthening the relevance and significance of this multilateral platform through the full and effective implementation of the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020 – 2025).

The publication of the ARF Annual Security Outlook not only offers a comprehensive overview of the Asia-Pacific security landscape but also engenders greater transparency on the defence and security policies of participating countries, the commitment that they have made and will make towards confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy at national and international levels. Likewise, it serves as a broad compilation of the achievements of the ARF in addressing matters pertinent to maintaining peace, security and socio-economic development within and beyond the Asia-Pacific region.

As the Chair of the 29th ARF, I have the honor to present to you this year's ARF Annual Security Outlook, which reflects candidly the varying views, concerns and aspiration of contributing participants. I am confident that this publication, like the previous ones, will raise public awareness on the efforts of the ARF participants in fulfilling our collective endeavors to create a harmonious community where our peoples can enjoy growing prosperity in peace, stability and security.



PRAK SOKHONN

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of
the Kingdom of Cambodia and Chair of the 29th ASEAN Regional Forum



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The 2022 ARF Annual Security Outlook (ARF ASO) is a comprehensive compilation of wide-ranging security and defence issues in the Asia-Pacific region from the voluntary contributions of 22 ARF Participants. The annual publication of the ARF ASO has been a testament to the collective commitment to uphold the principle of openness, inclusiveness, and transparency of the ARF in exchanging views on political and security issues of common interest and concern and developing cooperative measures to enhance peace and security in the region.

Given the immense pressure stemming from existing and emerging traditional and non-traditional security challenges, the ARF has consistently emphasized the importance to reinforce unity among its members for effective multilateral cooperation on all fronts and for shared benefits. Notably, many of the contributions have recognized that the paradigm of the regional and international security architecture has been shifted to become increasingly volatile due to more intense geopolitical and strategic rivalries and tensions. In response to the growing complexities of the security dynamics, it necessitates the common resolve to scale-up efforts to effectively utilize relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms, especially the ARF, to engage in dialogue and consultation openly and constructively so as to nurture mutual trust, confidence, and respect that are conducive to mutually beneficial cooperation for the sake of inclusive and sustainable peace and development.

The ARF ASO 2022 underscores that, in the evolving regional security architecture, a successful and action-oriented ARF obliges all of the 27 participating countries to uphold and promote active and full participation and cooperation so as to address challenges facing the region in a holistic and comprehensive manner while ASEAN's role as the primary driving force in the ARF process should be further enhanced. In that sense, the ARF participants through their contributions have reaffirmed their commitment to the continued building of strategic trust and confidence through practical confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy.



 AUSTRALIA

I. Our region

Australia and the countries of South East Asia share a region and we share a future. Our region is being reshaped and we have to navigate this period of change together. While we may have different perspectives to many issues, we all agree that we want to live in a region that is stable, prosperous and respectful of sovereignty. Where disputes are guided by international law and norms, not by power and size. A region that is peaceful and predictable. Where our countries and peoples can cooperate, trade and thrive. Where our relations are based on partnership and respect. A regional order with ASEAN at the centre.

II. The Regional Security Environment

Australia has the honour of being a Comprehensive Strategic Partner of ASEAN. Australia sees ASEAN as central to the region's economic recovery and prosperity. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Australia remains committed to working with ASEAN partners to continue to build an open, inclusive and resilient region that emerges from the pandemic stronger, safer and well equipped to manage future challenges.

The 2019 ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) remains an important touchstone for Australia's strategic approach to the region. In support of this vision, Australia's regional agenda is to enhance resilience to future shocks, build a regional order that ensures all states have a voice and can pursue their legitimate interests free from coercion, and to uphold international rules, laws, and norms. We are invested in deep and durable partnerships with ASEAN and its members and will continue to support ASEAN's efforts to maintain peace, freedom and prosperity in the region.

Our collective efforts towards this vision are being tested by a complex strategic, economic and health environment. COVID-19 continues to challenge our societies and economies, while Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has caused significant damage to regional economies and is in contravention of shared principles of respect for international law and sovereignty.

It is in all our interests that transparent rules, norms and institutions continue to guide state behaviour to facilitate cooperation on shared challenges. It is also in all our interest that disputes are resolved peacefully and in accordance with international law. These principles, which we share are central to peace, prosperity of the region, and ultimately the sustainable health and economic recovery from COVID-19. Australia is committed to its Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with ASEAN, and to a positive future for the region.

Our cooperation with ASEAN builds on our efforts to support key regional architecture led by ASEAN, like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the East Asia Summit (EAS). This architecture continues to provide a recognised framework for mutual confidence-building and to share views on key strategic issues of mutual interest.



1. Health security and strategic risks arising from COVID-19

As Southeast Asian countries continue to face high COVID-19 case numbers, affordable and equitable access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines continues to be critical for the region's health security. Australia continues to stand alongside ASEAN countries to combat the pandemic by providing a tailored bilateral dose sharing program, with end-to-end support, which has seen over 26 million doses shared with ASEAN countries to date.

Australia is committed to working with regional partners to strengthen health security and prepare for emerging infectious disease outbreaks through the five-year AUD375 million strategic investment in the second phase of the Indo-Pacific Health Security Initiative. Australia will continue to work with partners in Southeast Asia to support vaccine access and contribute technical expertise to build resilience in our region.

2. Climate Change

The Australian Government will take an ambitious and constructive role in international efforts to combat the climate crisis. The Australian Government has committed to a more ambitious 2030 target, to reduce emissions to 43% below 2005 levels, putting Australia on track to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. At COP26, Australia announced \$2 billion in climate finance for 2021-25, a doubling of Australia's 2015-2020 pledge. The Australian Government will increase support for our partners in Southeast Asia to help countries transition to net-zero, including through the establishment of a new \$200 million infrastructure and climate fund for Indonesia.

The recent IPCC Sixth Assessment Reports have highlighted the non-traditional security threat of climate change. The Australian Government has affirmed it will act in recognition that climate change is the main economic and security challenge for the island countries of the Pacific. Increasing internal and external displacement of people as a result of climate change impacts can lead to instability as people movements increase poverty, humanitarian needs, living pressures and competition for scarce resources. Our militaries are increasingly likely to be called on to respond to humanitarian and disaster situations, including helping support people who have been displaced. We have a strong interest in collaboration within the region to ensure we can operate collectively to meet the growing needs of our communities for support, while ensuring we protect those most vulnerable in the community, including women and girls, people with disabilities and indigenous people.

At the same time, our militaries are also significant contributors to national government greenhouse gas emissions and need to plan for a more sustainable future. We need to develop new supply chains for: distributed and digitised energy production and storage; battery electric vehicles; hydrogen/ammonia and renewable marine, aviation and land transport fuels. In Australia, like other countries in the region, the procurement decisions of our militaries and other security forces can provide a strong signal to markets about the importance of transition to low emissions cleaner energy. By working together, we can help drive a more rapid adoption of new technologies and drive down emissions by giving greater confidence that supply chains can respond to increasing demand.



3. Myanmar

Australia remains gravely concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian, security, health and economic situation in Myanmar. Australia condemns the use of violence against civilians and other serious human rights violations. Australia calls on the military regime to: cease the use of violence; release all those arbitrarily detained; including Australian Professor Sean Turnell; engage in dialogue; allow the immediate provision of unimpeded humanitarian access; and return Myanmar to the path of democracy. We continue to express our strong support for ASEAN's leadership in responding to the crisis and the importance of Myanmar making concrete progress in implementing the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus. Australia continues to work to maintain international focus on the situation in Myanmar.

Australia maintains an arms embargo on Myanmar and strongly supports calls for a global arms embargo. We are leading efforts to encourage those countries providing arms to the military regime to cease doing so. Australia has consistently called for, and remains committed to, accountability for war crimes, human rights violations and abuses, and atrocities committed in Myanmar, including those committed against the Rohingya and other ethnic groups.

We are deeply troubled by the complex humanitarian crisis in Myanmar. Australia provided an estimated AUD\$95.5 million in humanitarian and development assistance last financial year (2021-22) to support the key needs of the people of Myanmar, including healthcare, sanitation, education, food, gender equality and livelihood support. Australia has also committed AUD\$5 million to support the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management to provide humanitarian assistance in Myanmar, including for COVID-19 assistance, technical expertise, and the provision of personal protective equipment through ASEAN channels.

4. South China Sea

For Australia, the principles of international law, international norms, and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea all matter. These principles matter not only to claimant states in the South China Sea but to all states in the region. All states have a substantial interest in peace and stability, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded trade, and adherence to international law – particularly the UNCLOS.

Around 50 per cent of Australia's exports and 37 per cent of Australia's imports pass through the South China Sea. We are concerned about recent destabilising actions in the South China Sea, including: the dangerous or coercive use of coast guard vessels and 'maritime militia'; ongoing militarisation of disputed features; and efforts to disrupt other countries' resource exploitation activities. All claims in the South China Sea should be made and resolved in accordance with international law, particularly UNCLOS. Where claims have already been subject to binding legal judgments, the parties have an obligation to abide by them.

Noting ongoing negotiations for a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea, we believe any code should: not prejudice the interests of third parties or the rights of states under international law, particularly UNCLOS; reinforce existing inclusive regional architecture; and strengthen states' commitments to cease actions that would complicate or escalate disputes, notably the militarisation of disputed features.

5. DPRK

The DPRK has significantly ramped up both the frequency and variety of its missile tests since September 2021. The regime's return to intercontinental ballistic missile testing since February 2022 has been deeply concerning, as have reports of restorative work being undertaken at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site. The DPRK's behaviour, in clear violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions, threatens the security and stability of the Indo-Pacific and is a serious challenge to international non-proliferation efforts.

Australia has joined many other countries in calling for the UN Security Council to respond to the DPRK's escalating behaviour. We have also responded directly to recent DPRK provocations by expanding our autonomous sanctions regime, targeting entities involved in the violation of UN sanctions or for contributing to the development of the DPRK's weapons of mass destruction or missile programs. These measures supplement the existing UN Security Council sanctions, which we continue to urge all countries to enforce. Australia will continue to take action against the DPRK until it takes clear steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation. This includes undertaking regular deployments of military assets, alongside partners, to monitor and deter shipments of sanctioned goods to the DPRK. We join the broader international community in urging the DPRK to change course, cease all provocations, and make a sustained commitment to meaningful talks with the United States and the Republic of Korea.

6. Ukraine

Australia has joined with more than 40 other countries to impose sanctions against Russia, as a direct response to Russia's flagrant breach of the UN Charter and other fundamental principles of international law. Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has exacted a massive humanitarian crisis. More than 7.7 million people have been internally displaced within Ukraine and more than 5.3 million have fled abroad. Civilian infrastructure continues to be targeted by Russian forces. Russia's actions violate ASEAN principles of non-interference and respect for sovereignty and international law, as set out in the AOIP. It also violates the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), to which Russia is a party. There are significant implications for our region if states accept an erosion of international law and the principles enshrined in the AOIP and the TAC.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is exacerbating global hunger, disrupting food exports, increasing energy prices and raising fertiliser costs which have caused food prices to reach record levels. Russia's targeting and destruction of Ukraine's agricultural land and facilities used for storing, processing and exporting staple foods and its blockade of Black Sea ports has significantly disrupted Ukraine's growing season and its capacity to export agricultural commodities. This means millions of tonnes of grain are unable to reach global markets, putting upwards pressure on food prices.

Russia's invasion demonstrates that global peace and security can never be taken for granted. The challenges to the rules-based order know no geographic boundaries. What happens in Europe has real and significant implications for the Indo-Pacific and vice-versa. The situation in Ukraine provides a stark illustration of what happens when countries feel they can act with impunity and believe they can flout international rules.

We must come together to defend the fundamental principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity on which a free, open secure Indo-Pacific is built.

Australia has supported Ukraine through AUD 388 million in military assistance, AUD 65 million in humanitarian assistance and 70,000 tonnes of thermal coal. Australia reiterates its unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and for the people of Ukraine.

Russia alone is responsible for its actions and needs to end the conflict and the human and economic suffering it is causing.

III. National Security and Defence Policy

We face a dynamic strategic environment characterised by military modernisation, strategic competition, challenges to the global rules-based order, technological disruption and 'grey zone' tactics. Australia's overarching foreign policy goal remains to secure an open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region, and to uphold the rules-based order. Australia's recent support to Ukraine's efforts to defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty against Russian aggression demonstrates our ongoing commitment to these values globally. In pursuing these goals, Australia remains unwavering in its support for ASEAN centrality, with ASEAN-led mechanisms pivotal in promoting a peaceful, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific free from coercion.

In support of national objectives, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) deploys military power to shape Australia's environment, deter actions against Australia's interests and, when required, respond with military force. The ADF primarily operates in Australia's closest regions while also maintaining the capability to contribute to broader international efforts to maintain global stability. The ADF continues to evolve to meet new challenges; for example, a Space Command was established in 2022 to support joint operations, enhance interoperability with allies and partners, and to protect Australia's space assets.

Australia reports data on its military expenditure to the UN in accordance with the UN Standardised Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures, which can be accessed at UNARM (un-arm.org). Detail on the total number of personnel in the Australian Defence Force is published in the Department of Defence Annual Reports, available at: <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/information-disclosures/annual-reports>.

As part of its commitment to national and regional security, Australia plays a leading regional role in combatting irregular migration, people smuggling and human trafficking, especially through continued support to the Bali Process. Australia is also committed to countering disinformation harmful to our reputation, relationships, and interests. Disinformation and coercive statecraft undermine our values as free, open societies and erodes community trust in our institutions. Australia works with international partners through monitoring and assessment, building resilience, and mobilising international consensus against disinformation. Australia remains alert to emerging cyber threats and continues to enhance our own and our neighbours' resilience regionally. Finally, Australia remains engaged on a broad range of initiatives under our Pacific Step-Up policy, that reaffirm our commitment to remain the security partner of choice to our Pacific family.



1. AUKUS

Australia believes in a region where states are able to make their own sovereign choices – rather than having their future decided for them. Australia is seeking enhanced defence capability from our allies, in the form of nuclear-powered submarines. Not nuclear-armed, but nuclear powered. An enhanced trilateral defence and security capability partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and United States, responds to our changing regional strategic environment. It extends our capability edge and bolsters interoperability. It also complements Australia's multi-faceted engagement with Southeast Asia, and our commitment to ASEAN centrality and the AOIP.

Australia's acquisition of nuclear powered submarines is in the context of its strong and longstanding commitment to non-proliferation, its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). AUKUS makes Australia a more capable security partner, better able to proactively support the international rules-based order, and our vision for an inclusive, secure, resilient and prosperous Indo-Pacific, free from coercion.

2. National Contributions to Regional Security

a. Maritime Security

As a maritime nation, Australia is committed to working closely with regional partners and through international forums to enhance maritime security and promote habits of cooperation in the region. In the 2021 intersessional year, we co-hosted workshops on Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation with the European Union and Vietnam and on Law of the Sea and Fisheries with India and Indonesia. We hope to co-host additional workshops on maritime issues in the 2022-23 intersessional year. Australia is also working with regional partners to improve maritime domain awareness; combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; disrupt maritime transnational crime threats; and respond to marine environmental challenges. In 2021, Australia and India co-hosted the Fifth EAS Workshop on Maritime Security, and in 2022 Australia, Singapore and India co-hosted an EAS Workshop on Marine Debris. Following a number of years of advocacy from Australia, the ARF will progress consideration to establish an online working group to discuss guidelines for maritime law enforcement agency encounters.

Australia has worked closely with partners to support successful regional effort to combat piracy and armed robbery at sea, including through the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia. As a member of the Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM), Australia supports HACGAM initiatives to bolster regional civil maritime security by promoting greater agency-to-agency cooperation and promoting information sharing to achieve mutual outcomes.

b. Non-Proliferation, Counter Proliferation, arms control and disarmament

Australia contributes actively to practical global and regional non-proliferation and counter-proliferation efforts.

Australia remains unwavering in its support for the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as its cornerstone, including in pursuing initiatives under the AUKUS partnership.



For over fifty years, the NPT has continued to make a vital contribution to international security, through: driving nuclear disarmament; preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons; and ensuring that the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy and technology are available to all. The Review Conference in August 2022 is an important opportunity to ensure the NPT continues to deliver these benefits for us in the Indo-Pacific region and globally.

Australia continues to work closely with ARF partners to implement the 2010 NPT Action Plan and to advocate for nuclear risk reduction measures. This includes through Australia's strong involvement in the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) and continued engagement in the ARF ISM on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network. In November 2020, Australia co-chaired with the Philippines the inaugural ARF Nuclear Risk Reduction Workshop. The virtual workshop provided a useful forum to draw ARF members into a dedicated discussion on steps to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons use.

c. Cyber Security

Australia's vision is for a safe, secure, and prosperous region enabled by cyberspace and critical technology. Australia's Cyber and Critical Tech Cooperation Program contributes to capacity building efforts in our region, including ASEAN countries, to harness the opportunities of cyberspace and critical technology, while mitigating the risks. Australia continues to deliver activities that focus on: promoting the framework for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace; cyber security and incident response capabilities; promoting best practice use of technology for economic, sustainable and inclusive development; advocating and protecting human rights online; and also to promote regional coordination on critical tech standards, telecommunications, and broader cyber and tech resilience.

Australia is committed to multilateral cooperation in support of an open rules-based order, and to help address global challenges. This involves progress to enhance strategic awareness and discussion of cyber issues in our region, including through the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ISM on ICT Security). Australia co-chaired, with Indonesia and the Republic of Korea, the ARF ICT Security workstream throughout 2021-2022, and Australia and Malaysia are co-sponsors of the ARF Points of Contact Directory on ICT Security (ARF Cyber POC Directory).

Australia also strongly advocates for a global framework of peace and stability in cyberspace. In 2021, two concurrent UN processes considering responsible state behaviour in cyberspace concluded and adopted consensus reports – the UNGA First Committee Open Ended Working Group (UN OEWG on cyber), representing a universal commitment to a rules-based cyberspace and the sixth Group of Governmental Experts (UN GGE on cyber) – providing practical guidance to implement those commitments.

Australia recently partnered with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to launch a website for countries to self assess against the Survey of National Implementation of the UN GGE recommendations. The National Survey of Implementation of United Nations recommendations on responsible use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) by states in the context of international security (the Survey) collates national take-up of the active recommendations from the 2015 GGE report, as endorsed by the 2021 OEWG and GGE reports, with a view to assisting assessment of their further development and implementation.



Australia is especially focussed on efforts to enhance regional implementation of international law and agreed norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace. Australia has supported the publication of a report: The UN norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, which provides guidance based on best practice case studies from ASEAN member states.

Australia is committed to working with regional partners in the UN Ad Hoc Committee on cybercrime, to develop a long term, future-proof cybercrime convention, which is consistent with the existing robust international legal framework to address cross-border crimes. Australia's engagement in the Ad-Hoc Committee on Cybercrime is also reflective of the focus and priority Australia places on combatting online child abuse.

d. Transnational Crime (People Smuggling and Human Trafficking; Transnational, Serious and Organised Crime; Illicit drugs; Cybercrime)

Transnational, serious and organised crime (TSOC) remains a serious threat to our region. Australia works closely with ASEAN partners to address the range of TSOC challenges facing our region by sharing information and providing technical assistance, including through activities delivered under the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime, and the ASEAN Plus Australia Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime. Our commitment to combating TSOC in the region has been bolstered by the commencement of the Mekong-Australia Partnership on Transnational Crime (MAP-TNC). Australia will also support projects to address terrorism and transnational crime under the new Australia for ASEAN Futures Initiative.

While concerned by all TSOC threats, Australia is particularly closely engaged on people smuggling and human trafficking issues in the region. Australia is co-chair, with Indonesia, of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. Australia also continues to counter human trafficking in Southeast Asia through the ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking program (ASEAN-ACT), an AUD \$80 million investment until 2028. Building on these initiatives, Australia released Australia's second International Engagement Strategy on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery on 25 March 2022, increasing our strategic cooperation with partners and strengthening the systems in our region to detect, prevent and respond to these crimes.

Australia is also focused on the global illicit drug trade, which similarly presents a significant threat to the stability and security of the region. Crystal methamphetamine (ice) and its precursors are a key focus for Australia, though other drugs such as heroin, cocaine and synthetic opioids remain a concern. Australian Government agencies work closely with regional and international counterparts to prevent and disrupt the manufacture and trafficking of illicit drugs in the region, including through joint operations, intelligence sharing, and capacity building.

e. Counter-Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism

Australia works closely with our ARF partners to counter terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms, including through the Intersessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM-CTTC). In March 2022, Australia co-chaired with Malaysia and New Zealand, the ARF Seminar on the Role of Youth in Building Digital Resilience to Prevent and Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism (VECT).



Australia looks forward to co-chairing the ASEAN-Australia Dialogue on Counter Terrorism, as envisaged in the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) + Australia Workplan.

As Co-Chairs of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) CVE Working Group, Australia and Indonesia have developed a Gender Policy Toolkit and a National Local Cooperation to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Good Practices guide. Australia continues to partner with the Southeast Asian Network of Civil Society Organisations, and work to develop civil society organisations' capacity to partner more effectively with regional governments and the private sector on CVE.

IV. Role of the ASEAN Regional Forum

ASEAN centrality underpins Australia's engagement in the region and Australia remains committed to continuing its longstanding active engagement with ASEAN regional security architecture, including the ARF and the EAS. As the region's longest established forum for security dialogue and cooperation, we consider the ARF an important mechanism for constructive dialogue and practical, working level cooperation on regional security challenges.

Australia values the opportunity to contribute to the ARF agenda, including in recent years as co-chair of the Maritime Security work stream. We will continue to show leadership in the region by co-chairing the ISM on ICT Security.

Australia's engagement in the ARF supports integrated, whole of government approaches to many of the complex regional security challenges outlined above, including maritime security, counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation, and humanitarian and disaster relief. We are committed to further enhancing our role as a leading strategic, economic and development partner for ASEAN and its members, particularly in the context of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. We will continue to work through the EAS, ARF and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) to promote peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

BANGLADESH

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The world is presently in flux with emerging challenges, causing nations to re-evaluate their alignments and alliances while searching for new ones to help them counter those challenges. Moreover, parallel to traditional security threats, the world increasingly appears to be preoccupied with non-traditional challenges, including food security, water security, energy security, cyber security, climate security and most recently, the unprecedented challenge of the global COVID -19 pandemic.

Like all global players, Bangladesh is also faced with a multitude of challenges: further aggravated by the armed conflict in Ukraine on the back of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the country has come a long way since it picked the pieces of a war-ravaged land and started its journey as a sovereign and independent country, inspired by the dream of Bangabandhu for a *“Sonar Bangla”*- Golden Bengal.

Today, this dream is within reach of the people of this country: in February 2021, it received confirmation from the UN for the second time in a row that it successfully fulfilled all the criteria for graduating from an LDC into a developing country. This remarkable achievement is testimony to the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who steered the course of inclusive and sustainable economic growth over the past decade, as well as political stability. As a result, the country remains on course to fulfilling the vision to transform into a developed economy by 2041.

Bangladesh’s guiding foreign policy principle, *“Friendship to All, Malice to None”*, was enunciated by her founding Father. Bangladesh puts special effort into maintaining balanced, friendly and harmonious relations with all nations of the world, following non-alignment as a general guiding paradigm. Securing her national interests, preserving her territorial integrity and promoting sustainable socio-economic well-being of her people are the basic security imperatives for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh would like to emphasize on the following:

Geopolitical and geostrategic location advantage: Bangladesh is uniquely located as the link between two of the most vibrant economic regions of the world, Southeast Asia and South Asia and seeks to promote itself as a hub of road, rail, riverine, maritime and air connectivity for the landlocked countries/regions of South Asia to the outside world as well as to the continental countries of Southeast Asia. Bangladesh strongly believes that fully harnessing the potentials of the Bay of Bengal and smooth and seamless connectivity could help to transform the condition of the region.

Digitalization and Cyber Security: Bangladesh has identified digitalization as a means of transforming society and achieving its target of sustainable economic development. The Digital Bangladesh concept envisions delivering possible services to the people’s doorsteps through the digital platform. Bangladesh is also aware of the need to ensure Cyber Security and has enacted Digital Security Act 2018 and established a Digital Security Agency to ensure Cyber security, including data protection.

Terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism: Terrorism and indiscriminate violence spawned through its tentacles are the major threats to global peace and development. Bangladesh has “**Zero Tolerance**” for terrorism and has enacted laws and taken effective action against all forms of terrorism. Bangladesh firmly adheres to its commitment not to allow its territory to be used for terrorist activities against any other country.

Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding: Bangladesh is an active, leading and proud partner of UN Peacekeeping and Peace Building activities. Bangladesh remains committed to fully engaging in this process as an integral element in maintaining global security. Bangladeshi peacekeepers, including women contingents, have been serving with distinction in some of the most challenging global locations.

General and Complete Disarmament: Commitment to general and complete disarmament is an essential pillar of Bangladesh’s foreign policy, as enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is signatory to most of the major international treaties and agreements of disarmament and non-proliferation and remains actively engaged in the UN disarmament process.

Climate Change: Global Warming and the impact of Climate Change has emerged as one of the significant challenges of the world today. Countries like Bangladesh are emerging as the worst victims of Climate Change, but Bangladesh has taken some notable initiatives to minimize and mitigate the impact of climate change. Bangladesh has also achieved remarkable success in disaster preparedness and disaster management. However, the country is increasingly witnessing unpredictable weather patterns and multiple and intense natural disasters resulting from the effects of global warming.

Rohingya issue: The issue of the 1.1 million Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals has become one of the major security challenges for Bangladesh. This has placed a huge burden on the economy, ecology and social security of Bangladesh. Bangladesh feels that unless the Rohingya refugees are repatriated from Bangladesh, this will have major security implications for the country and the entire region.

The COVID 19 pandemic: Bangladesh, with its 160 million population, has been quite successful in containing the successive waves of the pandemic by adopting a prudent policy of “balancing lives and livelihoods.” Therefore, Bangladesh suggests that an ARF Fund be created to support economies recovering from the impact of the pandemic. Bangladesh also firmly believes that vaccines should be made available as a global public good for the benefit of all humankind.

II. Bangladesh Overview of National Security

Bangladesh’s concept of national security is embedded in its long struggle for justice, equality, sovereignty and emancipation and the nine-month-long war of liberation in 1971. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman steered the nation’s course with the aim of eliminating inequality, injustice, and oppression from society. Inspired by this vision and enduring legacy, our National Security policy keeps global, regional and national imperatives in mind along with focusing on the country’s geostrategic location.



The term 'National Security' for Bangladesh implies a condition where all security imperatives relating to politics, military, economic, sociological, technology, environment, legal, education, demography, health, food, water, energy and ethical aspects would guarantee pursuit of happiness, political stability, economic freedom, religious freedom, ethnic and communal harmony, equality, equity and above all capability of defending the country from external and internal traditional and non-traditional security threats. The ripple-effect of global and regional security threats substantially impacts our national security. Although Bangladeshis are renowned for their resilience, the unprecedented natural and man-made disasters from within and its border substantially affect the citizens' security. The dense population, shrinking land space, and scarce resources continually threaten her people and society. The influx of over a million Myanmar refugees has compounded the threat to our national security in recent years. Millions of Bangladeshi expatriates in some of the most conflict-prone areas like the Middle East are also a great concern. The effects of international terrorism, violent extremism, radicalization, trans-border crime, illegal migration, human, drug, illicit arms, fake currency trafficking, and cybercrimes are also threats to our security. Our society is increasingly connected through the internet and digital networks, exposing us to manifold threats and challenges for which we may not be prepared or have the resources to combat. The new technology has created many opportunities as well as vulnerabilities and has created a digital divide. With its increasing geostrategic importance, Bangladesh is a gateway for connectivity to the greater Asian region via the Bay of Bengal. Therefore, Bangladesh must remain vigilant to avert potential security threats.

1. Overview of Defense Policy

Bangladesh, with its unique linguistic, cultural and ethnic legacy and a solid attachment to cultural heritage, has contributed to a set of distinctive national values, including democracy, nationalism, socialism, and secularism. The fundamental objectives of the state, as enshrined in the Constitution, are to realize, through the democratic process, a society free from exploitation in which the rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedom, equality and justice, political, economic and social rights will be secured for all citizens. Bangladesh pursues her key national interest by ensuring security through securing its people, resources, land, waters, airspace, and core national values. It also seeks friendly and balanced relationships with all countries and security arrangements through bi-lateral and multilateral partnership with global, regional and sub-regional countries or organizations. Bangladesh follows a global approach, which strengthens its diplomatic linkages in an international community committed to maintaining global peace, environmental protection, human rights, and the security responsibilities enshrined in the United Nations (UN) Charter.

Defense diplomacy, deterrence and defeating hostile design form three pillars of Bangladesh's defence policy. Keeping in view Bangladesh's national interest and commitment to global peace and stability, the defence policy aims at protecting the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, socio-political stability, economic prosperity, environmental protection, global and regional peace and stability etc. These are addressed through a comprehensive security mechanism to accelerate the national progression and well-being of the country's people. Bangladesh's defence policy further focuses on compliance with all treaties and obligations undertaken by the Government concerning international peace and security, reduction of means of war and disarmament, and adherence to national security policy congruent with its foreign policy, "Friendship to all, malice to none".



2. Bangladesh in ARF

Keeping in view the objectives of ARF and the criteria for participation, Bangladesh first expressed her interest in joining this Forum as early as 1998. Bangladesh became a member of the ARF in 2006. Bangladesh is firmly committed to the guiding principles of the Forum, most notably, peace and disarmament. Bangladesh has received international acclamation in peacekeeping and peace building role as one of the largest troop contributor countries. In the ASEAN region, Bangladeshi peacekeepers were deployed in UN missions in Timor Leste and Cambodia. Bangladesh continues to catalyze the process of regional Cooperation in South Asia and beyond. Given her geostrategic location, Bangladesh is ideally placed in linking the countries of South Asia with South East Asia and traditionally has had very close links with most of the ASEAN countries. These contacts have further been reinforced through her membership in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Bangladesh has undertaken massive infrastructure development to upgrade its roads, rails, riverways, ports, bridges, airports, riverine ports and sea ports to connect the landlocked regions of South Asia, South East Asia, and East Asia. Bangladesh has a clear stake in the security and prosperity of South East Asia. This ranges from conventional security issues to emerging threats like trafficking in persons, drugs and arms. Bangladesh opposes terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and fully supports the ARF in combating this menace. Additionally, as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, even during the COVID -19 pandemic, Bangladesh has the potential to be a strong economic and trading partner for the ASEAN region and the ARF countries.

3. Bangladesh's Efforts in Countering Terrorism And Violent Extremism

Bangladesh maintains a policy of 'zero tolerance' towards all forms of terrorism including financing of terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism - both nationally and internationally and does not allow its territory to be used by any terrorist individual, group or entity against any state or people.

Bangladesh follows a counter terrorism strategy based on prevention, disruption, capacity building and upholding respect to human rights.

Prevention

Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism

Disruption

Measures to prevent and combat terrorism

Capacity building

Measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism

Upholding respect to human rights

Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism



Currently, there is no existence of any international terrorist outfit in Bangladesh. However, some home-grown domestic terrorist organizations have been declared “Proscribed” by the Government, and their activities have been banned.

We advocate for adhering to the relevant human rights and humanitarian principles in counter-terrorism efforts.

4. Comprehensive Strategy for CT & PVE

Bangladesh does not condone any act of terrorism on the pretext of their circumstances, method or objective. A terrorist must be identified as a terrorist only, irrespective of their race, colour, creed or religion.

Bangladesh has already employed several hard and soft approaches to deal with the threat of violent extremism. Hard approaches include intelligence-led operations, continuous surveillance on suspected terrorists and arresting or detaining terrorists. On the other hand, soft approaches seek to address the process of radicalization and community engagement where all the stakeholders collaborate through sharing their knowledge and experience.

The Government’s initiatives intend to implement ‘**four pillars**’ resembling the global efforts to combat terrorism:

- a. **To prevent radicalization:** Bangladesh emphasizes promoting the essence of the liberation war, culture and heritage, promoting family bonding and good parenting, strengthening social cohesion, addressing women’s role in preventing radicalization, increasing state’s capacity to prevent radicalization, engaging relevant stakeholders to build social resilience.
- b. **For countering radicalization:** Bangladesh is working on identifying online and offline hotspots, mapping geographic and demographic vulnerabilities, countering radical narratives, utilizing the information network, mass media and popular platforms, community-based law enforcement, monitoring the cyber world and trying to adopt people’s diplomacy.
- c. **For Countering terrorism:** Bangladesh is taking measures to deter, disrupt and isolate groups that use terror, building the capacities of state security forces to fight terrorist groups, and increasing the state’s capacity to prepare, prevent, protect and respond to terrorism.
- d. **The Government is also implementing a few de-radicalization:** programs to ensure psychological disengagement, religious education, social reintegration and rehabilitation.

Legal Measures

In recent years, Bangladesh has enacted a number of laws and developed several strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism. Some important legal measures are as follows:

- Anti-terrorism Act, 2009
- Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2013
- Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012



- The Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Act, 2012
- National Counter Terrorism Strategy, 2011
- Accession to the Palermo Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes.
- Digital Security Act -2018
- The Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act -2012

Establishment of specialized units

- ATU & CTTC:** Bangladesh government has formed the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) and Countering Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit (CTTC) under the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, which are especially responsible for conducting operations and investigation of terrorist and extremism-related cases.
- Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit:** Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) works as the national central agency for receiving, analyzing and disseminating suspicious transactions reports (STR)/suspicious activity reports (SAR), cash transaction reports (CTR) and any information related to money laundering, financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In addition, BFIU coordinates and cooperates with domestic regulatory, investigating and law enforcement authorities to combat money laundering (ML) & terrorism financing (TF). BFIU works very closely with Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and Egmont Group of FIUs to provide a wider range of international cooperation.

5. Preventing terror financing & money laundering

To develop and formulate policies related to anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism, Bangladesh established in 2010 National Coordination Committee (NCC), headed by the Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Finance.

National Committee on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Combating Terrorism and Financing of Terrorism

Bangladesh has established the National Committee to monitor the implementation of the provision of UNSCRs relating to terrorism, terrorist financing and financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, headed by the Foreign Secretary.

Banning of militant outfits

The Government of Bangladesh has already banned several militant outfits.

Awareness Programs Undertaken to Prevent Violent Extremism

The Government has engaged public servants, civil society, NGOs, media and educational institutions to strengthen the campaign against militancy. Imams have contributed significantly to the Bangladesh government's CVE efforts.



International Cooperation

As a part of her commitment to the eventual elimination of terrorism in all its forms, Bangladesh acceded to all 14 United Nations (UN)/ International Anti-Terrorism Conventions/ Protocols. Bangladesh signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in December 2000 to support the process of creating an international regime against terrorism and related crimes. Bangladesh is very much engaged with Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)/ Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) pursuant to UNSCR 1373, Sanction Monitoring Committee, and Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF).

6. Cyber Security

The Government of Bangladesh has enacted a holistic law for combating the growing menace of cybercrime in the form of the Digital Security Act 2018. The Government has established a Digital Security Agency to coordinate with local and international institutions to reduce the risk of digital crimes. In addition, a national digital Security Council has been formed.

7. Bangladesh in UN Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

Bangladesh stands committed to the principles laid down in the United Nations (UN) Charter, highlighting 'peaceful settlement of international disputes and maintenance of global peace and security. The vow to establish peace and security by Bangladeshi peacekeepers emanates from the principles enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh. Bangladesh has responded promptly to the United Nations' call for strengthening world peace and stability by contributing its troops and police for peacekeeping.

Bangladesh successfully completed 55 Peacekeeping Operations in around 40 countries with 1,79,701 peacekeepers. Bangladesh is also sending correction officials and judicial officers in peacekeeping missions.

Bangladesh has pledged 26 components to the UN "Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System" to meet the UN requirement.

a. Women Engagement in Peacekeeping Operations

Bangladesh is deeply committed to the WPS agenda, founded by the security council resolution 1325. As per the UN's Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy Bangladesh is committed to increasing the participation of women. Bangladesh is on the way to fulfill the requirement set by the UN for deploying 18% Women Military Staff Officer/Military Observer in UN Peacekeeping Operations by 2021. Bangladesh has deployed 400 Women peacekeepers as contingent members in different UN missions. Bangladesh Armed Forces deployed Women officers as contingent commanders of a military contingent in MINUSCA and the Central African Republic. Bangladesh Police has also deployed 150 Women peacekeepers in MINUSMA, MONUSCO and UNPOL.

Bangladesh is the founding executive member of the Women Peace and Security Chief of Defence Network (WCN) along with the UK and Canada. Bangladesh has taken over the Chairmanship of the WCN in 2022.



b. Achievements of Bangladesh in UN Peacekeeping Operations

Bangladesh can hold its head high globally because the Bangladeshi uniformed personnel have earned the gratitude of millions worldwide. The footprints of Bangladeshi peacekeepers are now evident in almost all the troubled areas of the world. In this context, the President of Liberia, Her Excellency Ms Ellen Sirleaf, also conveyed her gratitude to the Bangladeshi peacekeepers for their contributions and commented, “Bangladeshi contingent has gone beyond its protection mandate and helped to build up the manpower capacity of the country.”

c. Response of Bangladesh Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

Bangladeshi peacekeepers are known for their integrity and excellent conduct. Bangladesh maintains a zero-tolerance policy concerning allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. Any lapses in this regard are handled with utmost seriousness. Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was one of the earliest world leaders to join the Circle of Leadership on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations (in 2017).

d. Efforts of Bangladesh towards Peace Building and Sustaining Peace

Bangladesh perceives peacebuilding and sustaining peace as an inclusive and broad-based process beyond its traditional remit of short to medium-term post-conflict crisis response and recovery.

Bangladesh is an active member of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and is currently the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the effort of the Peacebuilding Fund, including implementing its 2020-24 investment strategy. Bangladesh’s support to the peacekeeping operations and the peacebuilding architecture of the UN is demonstrated by its pledging monetary contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund this year despite COVID-19-related austerity measures.

Bangladesh recognizes the importance of women and youth’s full, equal, and meaningful participation in peacebuilding. It is vital to reinforce the commonalities and complementarities of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda for peacebuilding. Both strategies must be integrated in implementing UN PBF’s investment strategy.

Bangladesh also acknowledges increased representation of women in various peace negotiations and in increasing gender specific provisions in peace agreements. Bangladesh adopted the first National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace, and Security in 2019. It recognizes women’s role in peacebuilding and puts emphasis on their participation in peacebuilding activities. In 2017, Bangladesh and Canada acted as focal points for implementing the Peacebuilding Commission “Gender Strategy”.

As a part of encouraging global peace initiatives, Bangladesh Peacebuilding Center started its activities on 01 November 2016.



Bangladesh stresses the importance of national ownership in peacebuilding involving relevant national institutions and all level stakeholders coupled with meaningful, sustained, and well-calibrated international support. Bangladesh also considers that institution-building is an important pre-requisite for sustaining peace.

Bangladesh Institute for Peace Support Operation and Training (BIPSOT) is promoting global peace and security as an international Centre of Excellence. In response to the UN Women Elsie Initiative Fund of uniformed women in the Peace Operations Secretariat, Bangladesh proposed one project during 2020 under Elsie Project Fund. Implementation of the project will significantly contribute to training more Women peacekeepers for deployment in UN Missions.

e. Culture of Peace

Bangladesh took the lead in introducing the normative agenda item “Culture of Peace” in the General Assembly and followed up with the flagship resolution entitled “Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace”. The resolution was adopted on 13 September 1999, during the first tenure of Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Since then, Bangladesh has been facilitating this resolution every year.

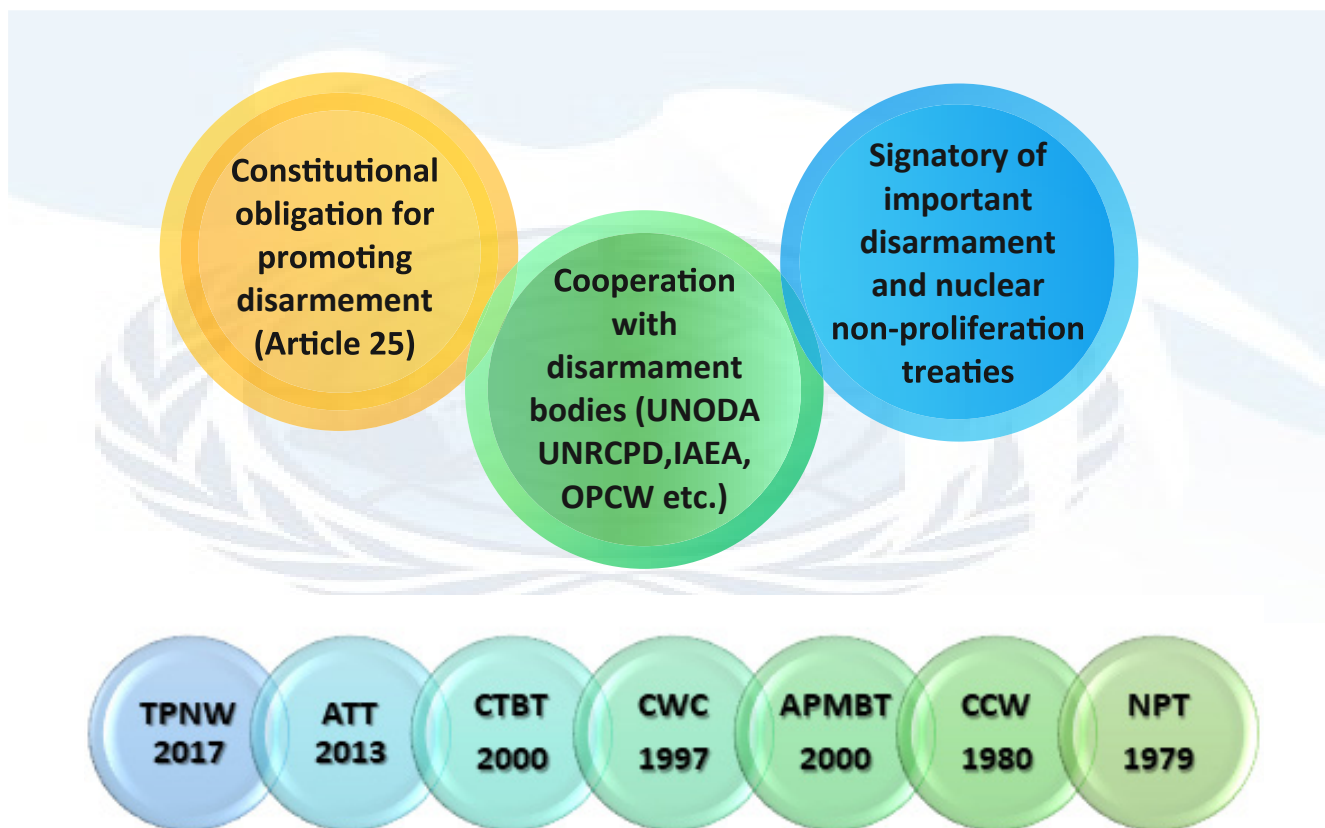
The notion of a “culture of peace” continues to earn increasing importance across the three pillars of the United Nations in addressing contemporary global challenges. Bangladesh considers the “Culture of Peace” as an overarching notion strengthening the message for peace in years to come and moving beyond the landmark Agenda 2030.

Bangladesh remains fully committed to the implementation of this concept through action-oriented policy interventions in eight programme areas of the ‘Program of Action on Culture of Peace’ – education, sustainable economic and social development, respect for human rights, equality between men and women, democratic participation, tolerance and solidarity, free flow of information and knowledge and international peace and security.

8. Disarmament and Nuclear Non-Proliferation

“strive for the renunciation of the use of force in international relations and for general and complete disarmament” Article- 25(a) [on the principles of the state’s international relations] Bangladesh’s commitment to general and complete disarmament is anchored in its Constitution and remains a fundamental pursuit of the country’s foreign policy. Therefore, despite living in the shadow of nuclear neighbours (India, Pakistan and China), Bangladesh has unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear. **“We believe that the security of our people can be ensured not through the accumulation of expensive weapons but through education, ending segregation, the promotion of democratic values, and the realization of human faculties by peaceful means,”** Hon’ble Prime Minister stated in her statement at the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament.





Bangladesh strongly considers disarmament as an instrument for enhancing international security and is concerned at the new arms race, rising geopolitical tensions, increasing military spending, and weakening arms control architecture. As a member of the UN Security Council for two terms during 1979-1980 and 2000-2001, Bangladesh was particularly active and visible in international disarmament efforts.

In various international fora, we maintain that in a world of finite resources, there is a close relationship between expenditure on armaments and economic and social development. Yet, research shows that world military expenditure has topped 1.7 trillion dollars.

Bangladesh successfully conducted the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) for the period of 06 July to 21 August 2020. As the President of the Conference, Bangladesh continued to urge the Member States to revitalize multilateral negotiations in pursuit of the disarmament goals.

Bangladesh has long been advocating the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world. Following the nuclear test explosions by India and Pakistan in 1998, Bangladesh took special initiative to ensure that South Asia remains a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone to ensure peace and stability in the region. As the first South Asian country, Bangladesh signed and ratified the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 2000 the “Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction” and the “Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction”.



In compliance with the **UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA)**, Bangladesh has put in place stronger legislative norms and administrative procedures to regulate lawful possession, manufacture, export, import and transport of small arms and light weapons. Every year, Bangladesh observes 09 July as the “Small Arms Destruction Day” to raise public awareness about the human, social and economic cost of illicit trade in SALW.

Bangladesh is a State Party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Bangladesh submitted the Instrument of Ratification for its accession to the CCW Amended Paragraph 1 and CCW Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War during the 68th UNGA.

Bangladesh stands strictly against chemical weapons usage anywhere in the world. Bangladesh is one of the earliest signatories of the **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)**, signed on 14 January 1994.

In the area of verification and nuclear safeguards, pursuant to provisions of the NPT, Bangladesh has also signed a **Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA**, which entered into force on 11 June 1982. Bangladesh became a Member State of the IAEA in 1972.

In the area of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, the Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has attached top priority to the generation of power for facilitating the country's socio-economic development in line with its Vision 2021. Nuclear energy is now considered to be a potential constituent of the country's overall energy mix as part of the broader energy policy. Bangladesh has decided to implement the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant project with technical and financial support from the Russian Federation and with technical assistance from the IAEA.

Bangladesh is a State Party to the Outer Space Treaty. Bangladesh has now a higher stake in outer space after the launch of the Bangabandhu-1 satellite for communications and research purposes.

9. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

Bangladesh voted in favour of UNGA Resolution 71/258 titled “Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations” on 16 December 2016, establishing the mandate for negotiating a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Bangladesh actively participated in the negotiations on the draft legally binding instrument in 2017, and voted in favour of adopting the negotiated outcome titled “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” (TPNW) on 07 July 2017. As a result, the Treaty was opened for signature on during 72nd UN General Assembly in September 2017. Bangladesh signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 20 September 2017; and ratified it on 26 September 2019.

10. Climate Change

Climate change is a global phenomenon that goes beyond national borders. It is an issue that needs to be addressed through collective efforts and innovative solutions not only at the national level but also at the local and regional level. The Paris Agreement calls for a coordinated and combined effort at the local and regional levels to ensure effective climate action in a sustainable manner.



According to the Global Climate Risk Index 2021 published by Germanwatch, Bangladesh is ranked 7th among the countries affected most from 2000-2019 due to climate change. However, the country's contribution to global warming is negligible (it contributes less than 0.47% of global emissions with per capita 0.98-ton CO₂-eq emission).

Economic Impact: It is projected that Bangladesh could suffer annual losses of up to 9% of its economy by the end of this century. Without changes to current global behaviour, Bangladesh would see annual economic costs equivalent to 2% of its GDP by 2050, widening to 9.4% by 2100 (ADB, 2014).

Bangladesh believes that the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement is a collective responsibility for shared prosperity. Climate finance is a key to this end. However, financing mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) are severely under resourced.

Initiatives taken for addressing climate change in Bangladesh to enhance climate resilience, Bangladesh has taken the following adaptation and mitigation activities:

Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP): At the national level, Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) was formulated in 2009. This is one of the most credible initiatives of any developing countries to address climate change in a comprehensive manner for a 10 year programme, built on six thematic areas namely:

1. Food security, Social Protection and Health,
2. Comprehensive Disaster Management,
3. Infrastructure,
4. Research and Knowledge Management,
5. Mitigation and Low-carbon Development,
6. Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening.

Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF): Bangladesh is the first country to set up its own Climate Change Trust Fund from its own resources. As of August 2020, the Government has allocated nearly \$443 million (3752 croreBDT) to BCCTF since 2009. So far, the BCCTF has undertaken 800 projects with an investment of USD480 million to implement strategic actions of the BCCSAP, which mainly focuses on adaptation, mitigation and climate change research.

NAP Formulation: The Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) has already initiated the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Formulation Projects, with USD 2.55 million financed by Green Climate Fund (GCF) (Implementation support provided by UNDP).

Allocation In ADP: Moreover, as part of its Annual Development Plan (ADP), the climate-relevant allocation has doubled over the last seven years, increasing from TK. 12,163 crore (about US\$ 1.44 billion) in FY2015-16 to TK. 25,124.98 crore (about US\$ 2.96 billion) in FY2021-22 which is 0.73% of GDP for FY2021-22.

Nationally Determined Contribution: Bangladesh prepared and submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) on 26 August 2021. As an unconditional contribution, Bangladesh will reduce its GHG emissions in the power, transport, and industry sectors by 27.56 Mt (CO₂ emission) (6.73%) below Business As Usual (BAU) in 2030 in the respective sectors.



Clean Development Mechanism: Bangladesh is also involved in the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Joint Crediting Mechanism: Bangladesh has a bilateral mechanism called Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) with Japan for transferring energy-efficient technology, providing up to 50% grants.

Climate Technology Centre & Network: Bangladesh is also involved in the Climate Technology Centre & Network (CTCN) under the UNFCCC Technology Mechanism for technology transfer. The Department of Environment is the National Designated Entity (NDE) of the CTCN

Adaptation Project: The Department of Environment (DoE) under the MoEFCC has taken a project on “**Adaptation Initiative for Climate Vulnerable Offshore Small Islands and Riverine Char Lands in Bangladesh**” to improve livelihoods through about 9.2 million USD financial support received from Adaptation Fund.

The DoE has taken another two new projects, one entitled “**Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Sustainable Development pathways of Bangladesh**” with approximately **5.7 million USD financial support** and the other one entitled “Building Climate Resilient Livelihoods in vulnerable Landscapes in Bangladesh” with approximately 8.9 million USD financial support from the LDC Fund of the UNFCCC operated by the GEF.

Construction of Cyclone Shelters: The Government has constructed 4291 cyclone shelters all over the coast. Besides, additional **523 flood shelters** have been constructed in flood-prone areas in the country. In addition, **550 ‘Mujib Killa’** (a specially designed raised land) have been constructed to shelter the livestock in coastal regions during the cyclone/tidal surge.

Plantation of 10 Million Tree Saplings: In order to celebrate the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh Forest Department planted 10 million tree saplings across the country last year. Additionally, to reduce the risk of death due to lightning, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief has planted **5.4 million Palm trees** which will also contribute to the carbon sink.

Initiatives on Renewable: a. Solar Power: More than 6 million solar home systems (SHSs) have been installed across the country, meaning that almost 18 million beneficiaries are getting solar electricity, around 12% of the total population of Bangladesh. b. Improved Cook Stoves: To reduce biomass burning emissions, over 3.5 million Improved Cook Stoves (ICSs) have already been distributed to rural households in the country.

National Solar Energy Roadmap: Bangladesh has recently drafted the **National Solar Energy Roadmap, 2021-2041** and set a time-bound achievable target of 30 GW by 2041.

Additionally, Forest Department under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has been implementing climate change adaptation activities in vulnerable coastal and offshore communities.

11. Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is ranked 26 out of 193 countries with a high INFORM Index for Risk Management which indicates that the risk of humanitarian crisis and disasters that would overwhelm national response capacity is high.

Bangladesh has signed the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), which requires proper monitoring and reporting coordination and progress. Under the Sendai Framework, Bangladesh submitted a progress report during the 7th Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022 Conference held in Bali, Indonesia. Bangladesh has taken a holistic approach to reduce the risks stemming from disasters, both man-made and natural.

12. Rohingya Issue

Bangladesh hosts around 1.1 million Rohingya displaced from Myanmar. The Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took a bold decision to temporarily shelter the huge number of persecuted Rohingya only out of humanitarian consideration. For this we have sacrificed 6800 acre of forest land, a huge loss of biodiversity and wildlife.

Besides bilateral efforts, Bangladesh continued her full engagement with international communities to solve the Rohingya crisis. Given the complexity and immensity of the crisis, Bangladesh also preferred to seek international support in its endeavor to resolve the crisis in a durable manner. The international community needs to make Myanmar understand the multifarious implications of a prolonged crisis.

13. Bangladesh Position on DPRK

Bangladesh is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NNPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), strongly supports all international measures for establishing a nuclear free zone the Korean Peninsula.

14. South China Sea

Bangladesh respects the principles contained in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea signed on 04 November 2002. Bangladesh deeply appreciates that all parties concerned have reaffirmed their respect for and commitment to the freedom of navigation in and over-flight above the South China Sea.

15. Maritime Security

Bangladesh has taken measures to criminalize the act of piracy and establish the applicable penalties commensurate with the offences' severity to ensure the effective implementation of Art 105 of UNCLOS.



Interests of Maritime Safety and Security

- a. The effective management and the security of the maritime areas
- b. The safeguarding of economic interests including the security of fishing fleets in the exclusive economic zone and Areas beyond national jurisdiction
- c. The protection of critical maritime infrastructure, such as ports and port facilities, etc.
- d. The preservation of freedom of navigation, the protection of the global supply chain
- e. The protection of the environment
- f. The preservation of peace
- g. The development of maritime situational awareness.

Threats to Maritime Safety and Security

Maritime safety and security threats are multifaceted and can be detrimental to marine safety and security interests as have been identified below:

- a. **Threats to the security** of fishing fleets and to economic interests at sea;
- b. **Maritime piracy and armed robbery** at sea, trafficking of human beings, organized criminal networks facilitating illegal migration, trafficking of arms and narcotics, smuggling of goods and contraband;
- c. **Maritime terrorism and other intentional unlawful acts** at sea and in ports against ships, cargo, crew and passengers, ports and port facilities and critical maritime and energy infrastructure;
- d. **Threats to freedom of navigation**, such as the denial of access to the sea and the obstruction of sea lanes;
- e. **Unsustainable and unauthorized exploitation of natural and marine resources**, threats to biodiversity, Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing, and environmental degradation due to illegal or accidental discharge of chemical and biological substances.
- f. **The potential security impact of natural or man-made disasters and climate change on the maritime transport system**, particularly on marine infrastructure.

Cooperation for Maritime Safety and Security

With a view to ensuring a comprehensive, cross-sectoral, coherent and cost-efficient approach to maritime safety and security, Bangladesh proposes the following fields of cooperation among the countries:

- a. Information sharing mechanism to counter non-traditional maritime threats,
- b. Controlling Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing.
- c. Bring together both internal and external aspects of maritime security
- d. Promote good governance; contribute to security at sea
- e. Establish better and lasting coordination of activities
- f. Enhance the growth and jobs potential
- g. Promote coordination and the development of further synergies.
- h. Enhance solidarity and foster mutual support.

Finally, it can be said that Bangladesh recognizes the true potential of its marine resources and develops an integrated maritime policy that acknowledges the inter-linkages between the different domains and functions of its seas, oceans and coastal areas.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The Asia-Pacific region is characterised by its diversity in its geographical, political and socio-economic aspects. Depending on the context, Asia-Pacific region is home to more than 60 percent of the world's population and covers an area of 2.8 billion hectares.

The fluidity of existing security issues and the diversity of the region reiterate the need for multilateral approaches to address challenges affecting the region. The momentum of cooperation between and among countries in various multilateral mechanisms and levels of participation have continued to endure. This has been reflected by efforts and initiatives in countering the various non-traditional security threats in ASEAN-Led Mechanisms, including through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) defence and security policy meetings, and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+) frameworks. The impacts of traditional and non-traditional security challenges alike also underscore the need for a holistic approach with wider involvement from all sectors and levels of society.

Brunei Darussalam values the open and outward-looking regional security architecture as it brings regional and international friends and partners to build confidence, deepen understanding and address common security challenges. ASEAN related platforms, in particular, are key to Brunei Darussalam, as the ASEAN Member States are placed front and centre to contribute to shaping the region's future.

a. COVID-19 Pandemic, Economic Recovery and Stability

In the past 3 years, the Asia-Pacific region continues to face the impacts of COVID-19 pandemics. Since its identification in December 2019, the COVID-19 virus has mutated and created impacts in what was described as waves, with number of infected reaching peaks and lows. With the latest Omicron variant, although the effect is getting less serious, the virus has become highly contagious. The introduction of vaccine in 2021, to an extent has controlled the virus into manageable level, as many countries around the world has gradually begun implementing 'endemic' measures by lifting most of the public health restrictions, measures and protocols set before. Whilst this is expected to help countries return to normalcy and minimise disruptions, vaccine accessibility and inequity are likely to prolong the global battle against the pandemic.

Economically, the region is bouncing back from the months of economic slumps. According to Asian Development Outlook, Asia's economy rebounded by 6.9 percent in 2021, nevertheless, the region's gross domestic product (GDP) is still 4 percent below its pre-pandemic trend. Despite a more favourable prognosis for 2022, the region's engines of growth such as hospitality, tourism, transport, and personal services sectors remain fragile and uncertain.



b. Evolving Geopolitical Environment

Meanwhile, the ongoing variations in the geopolitical and geo-economic landscapes brought a wide range of security challenges. The evolving regional architecture and new power dynamics require all countries to maintain a delicate balance of protecting their own national interests while concurrently ensuring international peace and stability. The uncertainty from any tension or conflict may further escalate and increase division in the region's geopolitical landscapes.

In recent years, there has been more cooperation with varying visions, concepts and strategies towards the Asia-Pacific region. As there has been increased cooperation within the region, there are also intensity in competition as security and economic interests of nations became closely intertwined. The emergence and development of middle power players arising from the minilateral arrangements such as AUKUS, the QUAD, and Five Eyes, could also potentially amplify geopolitical risks for further tensions.

c. South China Sea

ASEAN and China remain committed to continuing to promote maritime security and safety, enhance mutual trust and confidence, and maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea. They have reaffirmed their commitment to the freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability. They have also reaffirmed their commitment to fully and effectively implementing the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety, and emphasise the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC). They further look forward to the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law including the 1982 UNCLOS, within a mutually-agreed timeline

Brunei Darussalam reaffirms the importance of upholding and adhering to international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), remains committed to the maintenance of peace, stability, and prosperity in the region, and maintains its two-step approach in addressing the South China Sea, as reflected in its Statement on the South China Sea dated 20 July 2020.

Working in tandem with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the defence sector especially, practical defence cooperation aims to increase mutual trust and confidence, as well as enable dialogue and engagement at the highest level among ASEAN defence officials. These actions contribute to providing a positive and conducive environment towards achieving peaceful resolutions of disputes, and at the same time, enable close cooperation to ensure the maintenance of peace, prosperity and stability of the region.

d. Korean Peninsula

The momentum that brought positive prospect in the Korean Peninsula with the two summits between the US and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), as well as closer interactions between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and DPRK proved transient in 2021, with the demolition of inter-Korean liaison office at Kaesong and growing missile proliferation and tests.



The year 2022 remains a challenge for the peace process. Whilst these developments have prompted international condemnation, divergent responses to the issue continues to fuel a worrying development that could threaten peace and security in the regional environment. Maintaining inclusive and comprehensive engagement remains crucial and necessary to understand and address relevant parties' security concerns. This includes the importance of leveraging the multilateral platforms, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to oversee the implementation and compliance of the non-proliferation treaty in the peninsula. Regionally, ASEAN reaffirms its readiness to play a constructive role towards DPRK, aiming to achieve long-lasting peaceful resolution on the peninsula, upholding the international non-proliferation regime, and supporting a mitigation of tensions in the region, while the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) could also provide an opportunity for broader diplomatic engagement between DPRK and ASEAN.

e. Non-traditional Security Threats

While lingering traditional security issues remain, the region has also seen growing non-traditional security challenges that are increasingly complex, cutting across different sectors, in turn undermining prosperity, progress, as well as the well-being and livelihood of its people.

i. Terrorism, Radicalisation and Violent Extremism

There is a growing concern on the global reach of terrorism and the spread of violent and extremist influence in societies. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2022 have highlighted several key trends and developments on global terrorism. Notably, while terrorist attacks have increased, the impacts of terrorism, including deaths from terrorism, have decreased in 2021. The report also observes that politically-motivated terrorism has surpassed religiously-motivated acts of terrorism in the West. Moreover, Daesh has replaced the Taliban as the deadliest terrorist group in 2021.

Looking ahead, a number of factors are likely to influence the trajectory and development of terrorism. Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic and implementation of related public health measures. While the pandemic has changed the modus operandi of terrorist groups, including localising terrorist activities, border and movement restrictions imposed by countries worldwide since the onset of the pandemic have relatively limited the scale and movement of terrorist activities. The easing of restrictions, including lifting of border restrictions and air travel, could also observe a gradual return of more global terrorist-related activities. Of strategic concern is the political takeover by the Taliban in Afghanistan. For Southeast Asia, the swift takeover could embolden and motivate regional terrorist networks, and in potentially providing safe havens or training grounds for foreign terrorist fighters (FTF). Additionally, Al-Qaeda's growing allegiance to Daesh prompts concern for the establishment of new regional cells or even training camps.

ii. Climate Change

Climate change is now a security threat that can no longer be ignored as it is increasingly affecting global stability, military readiness, humanitarian crisis and will be a 'threat multiplier' in current and future conflict. Increased climatic events will inevitably require a shift in policy for the country's national security strategy. Further, as climate change is now increasingly used as a bargaining tool in politics, a new version of the climate-trap can render indebted countries vulnerable.



Recognising this trend, countries have already adopted a dedicated White Paper to address climate change. Climate change will also require countries to assess their climate vulnerability index to ensure their socio-economic livelihoods are not affected. This can be in the form of adopting more resilient measures such as the more resistant infrastructure and a more sustainable form of agriculture.

iii. Emerging Technology

There is a growing acknowledgement of society's dependence on technologies and the cyber domain. Regionally, whilst ASEAN Member States demonstrate varying levels of technological capability and development, there is strong political drive to increasingly adapt to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and overcome the disparity in technological development through cooperation and capacity building measures. Additionally, there is a growing understanding of the dual-use of emerging technologies for the military and civilian sector, including but not limited to, cybertechnology, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation, unmanned systems, robotics, as well as, space technology.

While the defence and security sector could leverage on the various emerging technologies, such as through promotion of technology and industrial collaboration and in the area of cybersecurity and disinformation, it could be noted that rapid technological developments could also influence the present defence and security architecture, as well as global international order. Specifically, rapid technological advancement that optimises artificial intelligence and revolutionises weaponry capability, may impact peace, stability and security, including placing the world at risk of arms race.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

a. Overview of National Security and Defence Policy

In support of the national development agenda in the National Vision 2035, Brunei Darussalam places importance on a whole of nation approach in providing assurances to the well-being of its people and the interests of the nation. The National Vision 2035 laid out three goals for Brunei Darussalam. Firstly, to be known for its educated, highly skilled and accomplished people and secondly, a country that has high quality of life of among the top 10 in the world. Lastly, a dynamic and sustainable economy with income per capita among the world top 10's.

Brunei Darussalam published its fourth Defence White Paper in May 2021, highlighting the direction of a comprehensive and current national defence strategic plan in the context of an increasingly challenging geostrategic environment, in line with broader efforts through a Whole of Government and Whole of Nation approach. The policy document also introduced the concept of Maqasid Syari'ah (Syari'ah Objective) and the importance of its values and principles in shaping and formulating every task and responsibility of defence towards national security and the well-being of the people.



In line with this, Brunei Darussalam's defence policy has remained consistent in ensuring its efforts are comprehensive, robust and integrated to protect and promote the nation's peace and stability. Brunei Darussalam's defence strategy supports the national development agenda towards achieving one of the nation's objectives of upholding sovereignty and stability. This underlines three core priorities: deterrence and response, defence diplomacy and holistic defence.

In this regard, Brunei Darussalam continues to develop strong and credible armed forces, in providing military capabilities with high levels of readiness and preparedness to meet various security challenges. As well as this, Brunei Darussalam is committed to maintaining strong bilateral and multilateral engagements with defence establishments and armed forces around the world. The holistic defence involves coordination and collaboration amongst local agencies to support each other's capabilities in the maintenance of peace and security and thus, contribute towards providing a positive enabling environment for the nation's political and economic progress and development.

b. Defence Expenditure

For the fiscal year 2022/2023, the Ministry of Defence of Brunei Darussalam's defence budget is BND597,673,680.00 (approximately USD430,325,050.00 @1.39), which marks a reduction of 2.05 percent from the previous financial year.

III. National Contributions to Regional Security

Brunei Darussalam remains steadfast and is cognisant of the importance of cooperation and engagements in the region to protect its interests and play its part as a responsible member of the international community. Its participation in various multilateral regional platforms, such as the ARF, ADMM and ADMM-Plus, as well as the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (ACDFM), present opportunities for Brunei Darussalam to continue to engage constructively in dialogue and work together on addressing common security challenges.

a. Defence and Security Achievements and Initiatives

In 2021, Brunei Darussalam as the ASEAN Chair successfully steered its agenda through continuation of meetings and summits within ASEAN Member States (AMS) and its partners virtually in the defence and security sector. Maintaining the positive momentum from previous ASEAN Chairs, Brunei Darussalam focused on promoting deeper and constructive engagements among AMS and its external partners in addressing common challenges and towards preserving regional stability. This is reflected through Brunei Darussalam's theme 'We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper', which looks into three main priorities related to the ASEAN Community Pillars.

The theme focuses on harnessing the caring nature of people in the region, preparing an ASEAN-ready and future oriented, and enabling sustainable prosperity in a resilient region. The theme further affirms its relevance and timeliness in achieving what is important for ASEAN in facing ongoing challenges in the region. Looking into the defence and military sector, Brunei Darussalam places great emphasis on deepening confidence and trust together with its partners.



Guided by the 2021 ASEAN theme, the defence and military sector translated its priorities by aligning the role of the defence sector in fulfilling ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC) objectives through the ADMM and ADMM-Plus platforms.

Under its 2021 Chairmanship, Brunei Darussalam championed several key initiatives, including the Stocktaking Paper on the ADMM and ADMM-Plus, with an intent to deliver a strategy for the future of ADMM. Additionally, Brunei Darussalam continued to strengthen initiatives introduced during its 2013 Chairmanship. This includes the expansion of Phase I of the ASEAN Direct Communication Infrastructure (ADI) to Plus Countries. The 15th ADMM also observed the successful revision on Brunei Darussalam's Concept Paper on ASEAN Defence Interaction Programme (ADIP), maintaining its momentum since it was last held in Malaysia in 2018. For 2021, the third iteration of ADIP observed a women-centred and women-only programme with a focus on the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

Additionally, the adoption of the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration by the ADMM-Plus in Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the ADMM towards a 'Future Ready, Peaceful and Prosperous ASEAN' in June 2021 highlighted strong commitment in continuing progress made by AMS and its strategic partners. The declaration further underscores the role of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus in strengthening its capacity and in enhancing defence cooperation to overcome unprecedented security challenges faced by the region and the world. The adoption of Joint Declarations by both ADMM and ADMM-Plus are especially significant as these declarations are often built upon the collective consensus of AMS and its Plus Countries. Thus, the issuance of the Joint Declaration is a clear testament to high-level defence commitment of promoting the ADMM and ADMM-Plus as the region's premier defence cooperation platform.

The ADMM and ADMM-Plus have provided added value to strengthen Brunei Darussalam's defence and military capacity and capability development. In its commitment to contribute towards regional security, Brunei Darussalam initiated three proposals of cooperation during its ADMM Chairmanship in 2013, which have significantly progressed at various stages. These include:

i. Logistics Support Framework

The ADMM Logistics Support Framework (LSF) intends to strengthen logistics cooperation that will enable the military forces in the ASEAN region to address non-traditional security challenges, including but not limited to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Search and Rescue (SAR), Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and anti-piracy in a coordinated and effective manner. Upon the validation and verification of LSF in a Table-Top Exercise (TTX) by all AMS in January 2016, the LSF was endorsed by the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM). In moving forward, Brunei Darussalam looks to integrating further with other ADMM initiatives such as the ASEAN Military Ready Group (AMRG) and the possibility of further expanding in the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs).

ii. ASEAN Direct Communication Infrastructure

In recognising the importance of developing an ASEAN early warning system to prevent the occurrence and/or escalation of conflicts, the ADMM has adopted the concept of establishing



and maintaining the ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI). ADI sets to provide a permanent, rapid, reliable and confidential means by which any two ASEAN Defence Ministers may communicate with each other at mutual decisions in handling incidences or emergency situations. This communication platform aims to prevent or defuse misunderstandings and misinterpretations, therefore preventing escalation and promoting quick response cooperation in emergency situations.

The ADI is launched in phases. The first phase, which is in the form of an IP-based mechanism, was launched on 24 October 2017, after the ADMM-Plus Meeting in Clark, Pampanga, Philippines. AMS conducted an ADI Exercise on 21 February 2019 to successfully test the functionality of the system and operationalise the SOP itself. The second phase is currently under deliberation among the AMS co-chaired together by Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines. The concept paper to expand the initiative to Plus countries has also been adopted by the 13th ADMM in 2019. This is anticipated to further promote open communications among the member states, and enhance regional and wider confidence and security building measure. In June 2021, during the 15th ADMM, the ASEAN Defence Ministers have agreed to adopt the Concept Paper on Enhancing the Usage of ADI as Defence Communications Architecture in the ADMM Process. The Concept Paper will further provide the policy and technical parameters for Phase 2 of the ADI. The next phase will see the expansion of user case and include a routine exchange of information.

iii. ASEAN Defence Interaction Programme

Underlying the practical cooperation, Brunei Darussalam views interactions among its defence and military officials as an important aspect to ensure enduring relations among ASEAN's future leaders. The essence of the ADIP is in building trust and understanding and develop mutual respect and instil the habit of mutual cooperation. The inaugural ADIP was held in Brunei Darussalam in 2014, with Malaysia taking on the second iteration in January 2018. Towards ensuring the continued engagements under the ADIP, the revised Concept Paper on the ADIP was approved in the 15th ADMM in June 2021. The revised Concept Paper intends to make the ADIP more sustainable while also fulfilling its intended purposes of strengthening regional unity and identity among ASEAN defence establishments through respect for diversity, equality and mutual understanding. In continuing the momentum of the initiative, Brunei Darussalam hosted the third iteration of ADIP in November 2021, which centred on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

iv. ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups

Within the ADMM-Plus, Brunei Darussalam is strongly encouraged by the progress of the seven ADMM-Plus EWGs in the areas of HADR, Military Medicine (MM), Maritime Security, Counter-Terrorism, Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian Mine Action and Cyber Security. Brunei Darussalam is fully committed and supportive of ADMM-Plus endeavours and has worked alongside the Plus partners. This includes hosting the inaugural multinational ADMM-Plus HADR and MM Exercise in 2013 together with China, Vietnam, Singapore, and Japan. Brunei Darussalam also co-chaired the EWG on Maritime Security with New Zealand from 2014 to 2017, culminating into the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security and Counter-Terrorism Exercise that took place in Brunei Darussalam and Singapore, and a Maritime Security Field Training Exercise in New Zealand.



As for the new cycle of co-chairmanship of EWGs (2021-2024), Brunei Darussalam works closely with Australia as co-chairs of the EWG on MM. In line with Brunei Darussalam's Chairmanship theme of "We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper", the EWG on MM will undertake a component of Project-based Community Medical Deployment (PCMD), Medical Aid Provision (MAP) which aims to address the concerns around the pandemic.

The works of the EWGs have garnered understanding, promoted capacity building and interoperability in all member states. More importantly, these have contributed towards deeper trust and fostering stronger military-to-military relations among the armed forces of the ADMM-Plus. Further to this, the practical cooperation in the EWGs contributes to ASEAN's collective response to addressing non-traditional security challenges. Particularly on HADR, there have been increasing integration of HADR in the broader ASEAN disaster response mechanism with efforts for closer coordination between military and civilian responders.

b. Peacekeeping and Peace Monitoring Initiatives

Brunei Darussalam also remains committed to participating in peacekeeping and peace support operations. Since 2008, the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) has been involved in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), in which a total of 375 RBAF personnel have been deployed to UNIFIL, and embedded under the Malaysian Armed Forces. The first contingent of the RBAF in 2008 comprised five (05) personnel and has increased over the years, totalling thirty (30) personnel in 2022. Throughout the fourteen years of RBAF's involvement in the UNIFIL, six female members of the RBAF served in the peacekeeping operations.

It has also deployed personnel for the International Monitoring Team (IMT) in Mindanao, southern Philippines since 2004, and in the 2021-2022 peacekeeping mission, there are four (04) RBAF personnel and one (01) Royal Brunei Police Force (RBPF). Further to this, Brunei Darussalam also contributes to the Mindanao peace process as a member of the Independent Decommissioning Board (IDB) alongside Turkey and Norway since 2014. Four (04) RBAF officers are currently serving in the IDB Verification, Monitoring and Assistance Team (IDB VMAT) in Mindanao, southern Philippines.

At the operational theatre level, such initiatives provide exposure and knowledge in operation in conflict environments for the personnel involved. The interactions and engagements of RBAF with its foreign counterparts and organisations further contribute to Brunei Darussalam's defence diplomacy. At the same time, these initiatives showcase the RBAF image as a professional force that can contribute meaningfully. For Brunei Darussalam, this also reflects significant support towards regional and global efforts to bring about peace and stability.

c. Countering Terrorism, Radicalisation and Violent Extremism Overview

The terrorism threat remains relatively low for Brunei Darussalam compared to its neighbouring countries. However, the region-wide and global terrorist activities have not excluded Brunei Darussalam entirely from its implications. Previous reports and investigation highlighted how foreign nationals utilising Brunei Darussalam as a transit point and to harbour greater support for their activities. This is further demonstrated through arrests of four individuals linked to Daesh in 2017.



Meanwhile, in 2018 an arrest was made on an individual with possession of Daesh propaganda-related materials, deliberately construed to garner sympathy and radicalise. Thus, these cases amplify the serious risks posed by social media and the cyber domain in the circulation of extremist ideologies and terrorist-related movements.

Transnational Crime Brunei Darussalam assumed the chairmanship of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) from 1 January 2021 until 31 December 2021. This marks the first time that the chairmanship for the AMMTC is also held by the chair of ASEAN in the same year. Brunei Darussalam hosted the 15th AMMTC and Its Related Meetings on 28 to 30 September 2021 and the 21st ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and Its Related Meeting on 26 to 29 July 2021. Brunei Darussalam's chairmanship of the AMMTC also saw the resumption of Dialogue Partner Consultations at both the Ministerial-Level and at the Senior Officials' Level after a year-long hiatus due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. All five (5) Working Group Meetings under the SOMTC were also resumed during Brunei Darussalam's chairmanship last year, namely the SOMTC Working Group on Cybercrime, Counter-terrorism, Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and Timber, Arms Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons. Brunei Darussalam also had the opportunity to chair the 35th ASEAN Heads of Specialist Anti-Trafficking Units meeting, as part of the 21st SOMTC and Its Related Meeting in July 2021.

As Chair of the AMMTC, Brunei Darussalam focused its efforts on identifying opportunities and challenges in fighting transnational crime in the post-COVID 19 era whilst also adopting the lessons learned from the pandemic into future plans of the AMMTC. As part of Brunei Darussalam's effort to strengthen the level of cooperation with ASEAN sectoral bodies and ASEAN dialogue partner countries in order to assist regional recovery efforts during the COVID-19, the 15th AMMTC had agreed to endorse the 'Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration to Combat Transnational Crime Post COVID-19 Pandemic' that serves as a foundation for AMMTC's planning to combat the latest crime trends especially in the post-COVID 19 era in the future, such as cybercrime and smuggling activities in border areas. The 15th AMMTC has also agreed to adopt the 'ASEAN Border Cooperation Roadmap' which outlined efforts to further strengthen the security level in the border areas of ASEAN region.

d. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

In Brunei Darussalam, the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) is the central agency in undertaking the whole-of-nation approach towards disaster management in the country. NDMC is under the administration of the Ministry of Home Affairs, established under Disaster Relief Order 2006. According to Disaster Relief Order 2006, the country is guided by two main documents in its efforts toward disaster management in the country; National Standard Operating Procedure (NaSOP) and Strategic National Action Plan for Risk Reduction (SNAP).

The NDMC looks at all aspects of disaster management ranging from prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery through policies, strategies and practices. It also acts as a leading government agency to coordinate the country's multi-agencies effort in any events that requires relief operation. The NDMC also initiates interaction and engagement through its various community outreach program across the four districts to create awareness and collect



localised knowledge as part of its preventive efforts. This is also to ensure the local community can prepare themselves and evade any foreseeable disasters through early management.

While the primary responsibility for disaster management is under the purview of the NDMC, the RBAF has served as a supporting role, particularly in the events that overwhelms NDMC's resources. The NDMC also manages multi-agency collaboration along with the RBPF, the Fire and Rescue Department (FRD).

Brunei Darussalam has actively supported HADR efforts around the region. Through the various ASEAN's platforms and mechanisms, there has been improvements in national disaster response coordination and capabilities derived from the sharing of best practices among member states as well as regional cooperation, when required. There has also been better integration and coordination on HADR in the broader ASEAN disaster response mechanism with effort for closer coordination between military and civilian responders.

e. Non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament

Being a small nation, Brunei Darussalam sees the importance of adhering to non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament effort. Brunei Darussalam is a signatory to various multilateral and global non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament agreements, notably those concerning weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Brunei Darussalam will continue its support for non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, as the country believes consensus and universalisation of these instruments are needed to ensure peace and stability, not only for Brunei Darussalam but the world.

Brunei Darussalam illustrates such commitments by participating in confidence building measures and activities, articulating support when needed, submission of reports to ensure transparency, and capacity building through technical assistance and training. In particular to United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1540, Brunei Darussalam supported the resolution and continuously updating the UNSCR 1540 matrix to fulfil the implementation of the resolution.

Brunei Darussalam also actively participated in regional effort for non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, such as through ASEAN and ARF, and in the international arena in United Nations and its associating bodies.

IV. Role of the ARF

The ARF, as the first Asia-Pacific wide forum on peace and security issues, continues to be an important security dialogue for the region. In line with its stated goals for confidence building, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, the ARF complements the work undertaken by the East Asia Summit and the ADMM-Plus. Alongside the official ARF processes, the ARF has also recognised the value of informal layer of exchanges through the ARF-Experts Eminent Persons (ARF EEPs) system that brings together recognised professionals and experts on specific domain issues. It has been envisaged for the EEPs to provide innovative ideas and recommendations on its three stated goals.



Further to this, the ARF-related platforms in the defence sectoral have given way to deepen understanding of the different perspectives on regional security concerns among its members. Both ARF Defence Officials Dialogue (DOD) and ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC) have long provided an avenue for defence and military officials to establish networks, build confidence and promote mutual trust among one another. The ARF Heads of Defence Universities, Colleges and Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM) has been valuable in promoting military education best practices and exchanges of research on security issues.

During Brunei Darussalam's co-chairmanship of the ARF DOD with Australia in May 2021, Brunei Darussalam proposed for the ARF DOD to have an institutionalised agenda on the sharing of developments of other regional defence cooperation such as the ADMM and ADMM-Plus as well as any other initiatives that could be shared to promote confidence building and exchange of best practices. In line with the Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practical and Protocol as well as the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II, the proposal intends to support the promotion of defence and security dialogue as well as practical cooperation to enhance regional peace, security and stability which includes enhancing synergy between ARF and the ADMM-Plus.

These various levels of engagements within the ARF underscore the inclusiveness and ongoing efforts in fostering dialogue and consultations. Brunei Darussalam remains committed to the ARF processes in promoting mutual understanding and working together to address the wide range of regional security challenges. In an increasingly uncertain regional security environment, engagements through dialogue, collaboration and cooperation at bilateral and multilateral levels are crucial to manage future risks in a comprehensive manner.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Most recently, the countries within our region are witnessing the major powers' strategy shift in the Asia-Pacific namely the "Indo-Pacific Strategy", "Belt and Road Initiative", and "India's Act East Policy", which are all announced to ensure peace, stability and cooperation in the region. However, it is evident that local politics and the shift in relative strengths of global or regional powers are in fact influencing the rules of international order previously entrenched.

The influence of defence-security issues on international relations has been on the rise. The new revolution in military affairs has been greatly changing the defence and military strategies of all countries. The military power competition around the world could possibly lead to the risk of arms races, especially at sea, and in space. Many major powers have adjusted their military strategies, increased their defence budgets, sped up armed forces modernization, and achieved advancements in weaponry and military technologies. These developments have influenced not only the relations among major powers but also the national defence strategy of all countries.

Against this backdrop, the Asia-Pacific region is making progress in confidence-building through common security cooperation both at bilateral and multilateral levels such as ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus, East Asia Summit... etc.

II. National Security and Defense Policy

The Ministry of National Defence of Cambodia released another strategic document in the middle of May 2022 known as the Defence White Paper 2022 (DWP2022). The ultimate goal of the DWP2021 is to reshape Cambodia's national defence objectives towards 2030 through a carefully defined strategy of safeguarding peace, defending national interests, and strengthening international cooperation and engagement. Cambodia's defence policy intends to promote a stable, secure, and rules-based order approach by pivoting on four key defence priorities which consist of border defence, internal security, military reform, and international cooperation.

Border defence is still at large standing as the top defence priority for Cambodia. This consideration is based on several factors. While the process of border demarcation with our neighboring nations is showing notable progress, we continue to face hurdles in misperception or possibly even frictions that could occur and escalate at any time as experienced in the recent pasts. Overlapping maritime claims are unlikely to be resolved in the near future and Cambodia must remain subtle in avoiding any kind of violent tensions. Cross-border illegal activities are of concern including narcotics, arms and human trafficking, and other transboundary crimes. In response to these challenges and threats, we believe that the effort of maintaining political and security dialogues through existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms is vital in guaranteeing peaceful, stable, and developed borders with our neighboring nations.

Over the years, the Royal Government of Cambodia has taken effective measures to repel and counter threats posed to domestic security. The attempt to ravage peace and stability through

organized crime known as the “Color Revolution” has come about over the past few years. The emergence of both internal and external cybercrime of any form also poses an unprecedented threat to national cyber security. Thus, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) must not fail in playing a significant and leading role in countering cyber threats in the future. Fortunately, Cambodia so far has not encountered any threats in the form of international terrorism. Despite this fact, the return of foreign fighters of ISIS in the region, the spread of ideological extremism and radicalism, and the use of sophisticated technology such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, and bio-technology have posed grave concerns not only to regional and global security but also to the national security of Cambodia.

Moving beyond our borders, Cambodia is strongly committed to collaborating with our regional and international security partners to safeguard and promote peace, security, and stability in the region. We are firm in our support of existing regional security architectures namely ADMM, ADMM Plus, and ARF, among others. We will continue to build strong partnerships with regional nations in the form of human resource development, capacity building, and exchange of expertise.

Over the next 10 years, the RCAF will undertake its reform process aiming at restructuring our defence and military institutions, improving military personnel management and human resource capabilities, simplifying roles and responsibilities, and upgrading our platform which will modernize our land, sea, and air defence capabilities. As a result, this will see the RCAF increase its participation in exercises and activities within the ASEAN frameworks.

Ream Naval Base Modernisation

Cambodia has always displayed goodwill to strengthen and encompass military cooperation with countries in the region and around the world, based on the principle of respect of mutual interests. The development of the RCAF’s capability is an obligation of the Royal Government of Cambodia in the same way as that of other countries in the world. The modernisation of Ream Naval Base, which has been in progress for many years, is an important part of the capability development of the Royal Cambodian Navy. This process aims to take more effective control of Cambodia’s maritime zones and to participate with other nations in maintaining peace, stability and security in the region. The continuous baseless accusations related to the foreign military presence, aimed at the disruption of this development, have revealed an intention to view Cambodia as being unable to master the defence of its sovereignty. These unfounded accusations are a pretext for geopolitical, hegemonial strategy in the Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific.

However, Cambodia is keen to demonstrate its transparency and mastery of all activities in relation to Ream Naval Base development. Cambodia has made a lot of concessions when other countries are unable to do the same. We have allowed visits to Ream Naval Base by a number of military representatives which have been regarded as cooperation through goodwill and friendship. In addition, we notified relevant parties, through official correspondence and public announcement, that foreign-funded buildings on the base were to be relocated. However, we find it difficult to accept any further demands that are by nature an intention to search or investigate these areas. Such demands violate our rights and sovereignty and contradict the spirit of maintaining friendship and cooperation.



Cambodia will be the sole owner of Ream Nava Base in all circumstances. No foreign countries will be given exclusive management of this Base. This is not only Cambodia's full responsibility but also a commitment to its sovereignty which is enshrined in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia and guaranteed through the strong policy of the Royal Government of Cambodia. Nevertheless, Cambodia has repeatedly reaffirmed that any cooperation with respect of mutual interests is always welcomed, including the use of Ream Naval Base, after the completion of the development, by international partners with Cambodia as the exclusive owner. In this regard, Cambodia reiterates that the modernisation of Ream Naval Base is not a security threat, but instead, serves the interests of the entire region.

III. Cambodia's Contributions to Regional Security

i. Counterterrorism

Terrorism is a threat to both global social and security orders, and an issue to the world leaderships and populations. Cambodia has taken a significant step to fight against terrorism. Although the security scope has been shifted over to the world-long stretching pandemic (Covid-19) since 2020, combatting international terrorism has again taken its shape in our government and the National Counter-Terrorism Special Force is in a ready posture, for both training and operations. We have planned for national and international exercises with our counterparts to strengthen our skills, information sharing and fighting capabilities. With a view to making sure of a peaceful region by preventing terrorist activities; deterring and combatting terrorism to maintain peace, stability, and security and promote cooperation in the region and the world..

In response to growing terrorism threats, the Royal Government of Cambodia has taken several important steps which include:

- Fighting for information and sharing them with our operational partners, both nationally and internationally.
- Supporting external partners at all levels on various counter-radicalization initiatives by the government such as educational programs and local community supports, spreading soft approach agendas, nesting local community regardless of their religions, race or color by encouraging them to share, talk, and understand each other as a measure of preventing them from being radicalized.
- Enhancing maritime security via the empowerment of the National Committee for Maritime Security and its maritime CT components, by conducting joint training and exercises, and by sending relevant individuals for joint planning exercises, information sharing workshops, seminars and many other educational programs. All these activities can assure that Cambodian CT elements are better equipped with knowledge and skills.
- Implementing measures to improve land and sea border security as well as closely cooperating with partners in strengthening response capabilities on cross-border terrorism through monitoring and tracking terrorist movements, activities and networks as well as supporting resources and supply routes.

Thus far, Cambodia can conduct fully self-reliant training and operations among her Special Operation Forces. We have increased our operational capabilities to respond simultaneously across the country, gaining control over any unforeseen and foreseen situations that required quick release and response forces.



The government on the other hand has participated in different cultural, traditional, and religious celebrations of the communities to show that the government is here to support everyone equally at all costs and that everyone is part of the society, sharing the same land, celebrating each other traditional, cultural and religious events. Doing this lets everyone know that their cultures and traditions are fully accepted and respected within this country.

ii. Non-Proliferation, Counter Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

The Kingdom of Cambodia has committed to a range of capacity-building for non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament in regard to national laws and legislations as well as regional and international legal instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) to present the illicit trafficking of WMD, and materials used in developing such weapons. Cambodia has been actively engaging in various diplomatic efforts to ensure the peaceful use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) materials and the national implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540).

According to Article 54 of Cambodia's Constitution, the manufacture, use and storage of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons shall be absolutely prohibited. To support the global movement on the non-proliferation of WMD, the Kingdom of Cambodia has adopted various international conventions and treaties to combat the use of WMD and become a party to several organizations and treaties which include the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), United Nation Security Council Resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540), International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol.

At the national level, significant legal frameworks were adopted and have been implemented such as the Law on the Prohibition of Chemical, Nuclear, Biological and Radiological Weapons; Law on Counter-Terrorism; Law on the Management of Weapons, Explosives and Ammunition; Law on the Management of Pharmaceuticals; Law on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism; and Law on the Punishment of Acts of Terrorism.

The Kingdom of Cambodia established the National Authority for the Prohibition of Chemical, Nuclear, Biological and Radiological Weapons (NACW) to serve as a national central point for effective liaisons with international organizations and States Parties in disarming and combating the proliferation of CBRN weapons. The NACW is also missioned to disseminate, educate and raise public awareness of national and international laws.

The Kingdom of Cambodia recognizes the importance of developing an integrated and comprehensive approach to mitigating CBRN risks/threats and works with international partners to minimize such dangers by developing the CBRN National Action Plan (NAP) to focus on prevention, detection, and preparedness and response. The CBRN NAP covers a wide range of CBRN activities and is tailored to addressing CBRN hazards – whether natural, accidental or criminal in origin – of greatest relevance to the country.



The Kingdom of Cambodia is fully in line with many initiatives including the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), European Union CBRN Centre of Excellence (EU CBRN CoE), United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the activities of the Committee established pursuant to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), World Health Organization's protocol for assessing National Surveillance and response capacities for the International Health Regulations (IHR), International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), World Customs Organization (WCO), Network of ASEAN CBR Defence Experts, and countless partner countries in the region and world.

As the Kingdom of Cambodia becomes chairman of the ASEAN ADMM 2022, NACW plans to play a role as a co-chair of the CBR Conference in the framework of ADMM-Plus. Cambodia also faithfully cooperates and implements the law on combating the finance of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in Cambodia. It means that Cambodia values collective efforts and is ready to collaborate and cooperate with all countries in the region and global arena to mitigate CBRN risk and threat to the security and peace of the people.

iii. Transnational Crime

Transnational Crime is a common concern and poses a complicated challenge in the Southeast Asian region including Cambodia. To date, transnational crime has not yet decreased. It poses a threat to the stability, security, economic development and public order of every country in the region. Although there has been cooperation between the countries in the region to suppress and prevent crime, it is still evolving along each country's borders. Furthermore, criminal groups have well-organized structures and networks. At the same time, globalization and regional integration have made the movement along the national borders, the flow of humans, finance and technology from one country to another free and much easier. Moreover, the rapid development of information technology is a factor that eases those criminals' communication and activities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some organized-criminal activities have been slightly reduced due to the strict measures adopted by the authorities to curb the spread of COVID-19. However, it is also an opportunity for some other criminal groups to build networks and conduct their activities, especially for drug traffickers as there has been a notable increase in illegal drug-related offences, while the authority is busy in responding to the pandemic.

There are various types of transnational crimes, most notably:

- a. **Cybercrime:** is a crime in the information technology era which includes fake news, cyber fraud, and hacking to steal important data from state institution and private companies which causes significant loss of finance. Currently, this crime is becoming a hotly debated topic and a dangerous challenge.



- b. **Illegal Arms Smuggling:** is a crime in the information technology era which includes fake news, cyber fraud, and hacking to steal important data from state institution and private companies which causes significant loss of finance. Currently, this crime is becoming a hotly debated topic and a dangerous challenge.
- c. **Drug trafficking:** is still a challenge that needs to be carefully monitored particularly in the regions along the Mekong River due to the flow of drugs from the Golden Triangle Region (borders between Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos). The authority in the region has seized the illegal drugs that were planned to be sold outside the region and the number of seizure is still on the rise. International criminals are still trying to use Cambodia as a country to produce, process and transport drugs in all forms through land, sea, and postal means. The border provinces remain vulnerable to drug trafficking despite the crackdown on major cases and criminal organizations. Furthermore, it is challenging for the government to monitor the situation as the criminals attempt to use small entry points to illegally cross the borders. During the COVID-19 pandemic, illegal drug production and trafficking trend across the world continues to rise, especially the production of synthetic drug (ATS), which is a major threat in every region including Cambodia.
- b. **Human Trafficking and Exploitation:** is still a challenge in the region. Ten of thousands of the victims were trafficked along the borders and deceived by the middle persons to work without payment. Some women were forced to work overtime or were sexually exploited. Despite the travel restriction during the COVID-19 pandemic, Cambodia is still concerned about human trafficking by middle persons through illegal entry points.
- e. **Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing:** is a common concern in the region and the world because syndicate and terrorist groups always launder their money through transferring, trading and doing business from one country's bank to another. Cambodia is among the countries that are vulnerable to money laundering and terrorism financing. Therefore, the government has closely monitored these issues.

Measures and cooperation to suppress the transnational crime:

- a. **Cybercrime:** The Royal Government of Cambodia has both legal and institutional mechanisms such as:
 - Digital Government Policy 2022-2035 on 28 January 2022, which also focuses on the development of Digital Government Infrastructure and Cyber Security.
 - Law on Anti-Cybercrime (drafting stage)
 - Sub-Decree on National Internet Gateway (NIG) which took effect on 16 February 2021 will allow the authority to maintain and protect the security and safety of Internet use in Cambodia.
 - Establishment of a Department of Anti-Cybercrime under the General Commissariat of National Police, Ministry of Interior, to suppress all offences related to cybercrime.
- b. **Illegal Arms Smuggling:**
 - Strictly enforce measures in checking and monitoring all flows of goods in all target zones and border checkpoints in the country and along the borders.



- Increase cooperation in the region to share information related to any case or individual suspected of arms and ammunition smuggling.
- Improve effectiveness in implementing the law on Arms control, Explosive Substance and Ammunition.

c. Drug Trafficking:

- Enforce the capability to check and find narcotic substances by providing modern equipment for law enforcement institutions.
- All countries shall strictly enforce the law and punish criminals.
- Raise awareness and educate the population, especially the youths, about the risk and harmful impact of consuming drugs.
- Impose control measures on dual-use chemicals (which can be used as precursors to produce illegal drugs) and plan to draft laws to control chemical substances that can be used to produce illegal drugs.
- The issuance of the seventh “one-year campaign strategy” to combat illegal drugs from 1st January to 31st December of 2022 after the sixth successful “one-year campaign strategy” to combat illegal drugs.
- International cooperation with bordering countries.

d. Human Trafficking:

- Raise awareness and educate the population to understand the laws and regulations such as labor law, the law on immigration, and the law on marriage with foreign nationals, and explain the risks of immigration so that they can prevent themselves from being exploited by criminals.
- Enforce the law on Immigration by the authority and strictly punish the criminals in accordance with the law.
- The strict control of the borders as well as the corridors between the neighboring countries is needed to prevent the pandemic and monitor illegal crossing activities.

e. Combating against Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing:

- To combat money laundering, Cambodia adopted the law on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism on 27 June 2020. This law paves the way for effective enforcement of measures in combating illegal activities by terrorist groups. On 18 January 2022, the Ministry of Justice formed a task force to fight money laundering and the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, led by the minister of justice.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)

As we are all aware, the continuation of competitions between powerful nation-states for geopolitical influences, economic influences, and territorial integrity, brought greater challenges to the global system which greatly influences the world’s social, political, economic, and security stability in the region and throughout the world. Complexities from these challenges exert greater problems for many nation states to access resources such as food, medication, shelter, and energy. Compounded with the COVID-19 pandemic, environmental degradation, technological advancement, cyber security, socio-cultural and geopolitical changes through civil wars and national identity have created even greater uncertainty and complexity in our global environment. Furthermore, with the borderless global environment, we are continually being exposed to even more vulnerability, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) in the global environment.



Beyond these transnational challenges, regional countries as well as nation-states throughout the world are struggling to fight to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly affected the economic, security, health, and well-being of our daily lives. Additionally, other non-traditional threats such as natural disasters have also been increasingly prevalent in our global environment. As far as natural disasters are concerned, relentless typhoons, hurricanes, landslides, and massive earthquakes in our region have increased in frequency at an alarming rate possibly due to the impact of climate change. Furthermore, traditional threats such as drug trafficking, human smuggling, illicit arms trade, piracy, and other violent extremist movements have affected our daily lives and well-being as well. Disasters such as these often outweigh the capabilities of our respective governments, and individual nation states to quickly deal with, respond, and assist.

The Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia has been continuing working endlessly with other ASEAN member states, civil societies, and national and international non-governmental organizations to establish new concepts, procedures, guidelines, regulations, and laws on disaster management. In addition, the RCAF and the Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie (RCG) have been implementing and participating in various bilateral and multilateral exercise activities on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in line with the ASEAN Charter, agreement, protocol and other existing mechanisms. Cambodia is committed to supporting all defence cooperative activities conducted by the ASEAN militaries, regional militaries. To further contribute to national, regional, and world security, the Cambodia has carried out measures in disaster relief operations through the implementation of national legislation, and national policy as well as through the establishment of National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM). Additionally, Cambodia will increase her participation in both bilateral and multilateral defence cooperative activities, particularly in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations (HA/DR).

Therefore, by increasing its participation in Command Post Exercises, Field Training Exercises (CPX/FTX), workshops, and seminars. For instance, two Cambodian gendarmeries officers had participated in the 3rd Japan-ASEAN HA/DR table-top exercise in February 2020. Respectively, five Cambodian gendarmerie officers participated in an online workshop “Senior Executive Programme in Disaster Management” in October 2020; and nineteen other Cambodian officials from various related institutions participated in the November 2020 online course “National Disaster Response Online Course”. These activities are the integral part of turning vision into reality through forming partnership and collaborative engagement. Additionally, they have improved multinational operational capabilities in HA/DR and HA/DR medical planning processes as a whole. Undoubtedly, disaster preparedness and readiness are the key elements to the strategic blueprint for the ASEAN Community, and regional partners to hedge against this uncertainty as well as the key element to promoting a successful outcome and turning vision into reality. In summary, continued efforts to strengthen relationship and closer cooperation while implementing more frequent pragmatic defence cooperative activities among the ASEAN militaries, and regional partners will undoubtedly build trust, confidence, professionalism and partnership. In addition, our ASEAN militaries, and regional partners will possess the capabilities, skill sets, and intellectual knowledge to respond to these challenges while anticipating and preparing for those of tomorrow. To succeed, we must harness and integrate all aspects of our capabilities, intellectual knowledge, and work closely with allies, friends, and partners.



Promoting closer defence cooperation and implementing more pragmatic defence cooperative activities among the ASEAN member states, and partner nations through either bilateral or multilateral exercises would undoubtedly enhance our military's tactical, operational, and strategic capability which eventually help to strengthen our national, regional, and global security as a whole.

v. Maritime Security

Regional Maritime development has been highly regarded as ASEAN's growth center such as fishery, forest, oil, natural gas and mineral resources. Sea is the gateway for trade and tourism; thus, the sea must be peaceful and stable. Along with these developments, ASEAN faces a variety of challenges including piracy, sea robberies, IUU fishing, transactional crime, human and drug trafficking, contraband smuggling, terrorism, environmental destruction, climate change, and other non-traditional threats. In particular, Cambodia has actively taken part in a number of initiatives to develop the global maritime policy.

In response to maritime threats, The Royal Government of Cambodia established the National Committee for Maritime Security (NCMS), which put into place overarching constitutional provisions, national strategy and vision for Maritime Security. NCMS is a national inter-agency mechanism responsible for leading two primary missions: (1) defending the country's maritime sovereignty and (2) managing cohesive maritime law enforcement for the Kingdom of Cambodia. Identifying that Maritime Security requires operations from all involved agencies of the government beyond defense, NCMS facilitates and provides cohesions for national cooperation strategically and tactically. NCMS has organized a large-scale biennial national training exercise named MOHAROU-EL since 2017, aimed at strengthening collaboration and inter-agencies skills. Furthermore, Cambodia has participated in almost all forms of maritime security fora including ARF, AMF, EAMF, ACGF, EAS, ADMM, ADMM-Plus, etc. Cambodia is still an active member of the Southeast Asia Maritime Law Enforcement Initiative (SEAMLEI).

The Royal Cambodian Navy (RCN) plays a pivotal role in defense of Cambodia's coastline, islands and maritime sovereignty, monitoring the security of its main deep-water ports and crucial waterways. Moreover, the RCN has been carrying out its international missions under the framework of the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) and the spirit of ACDFM, ADMM and ADMM-Plus, as a compass and an integrated approach to maintaining peace, security and stability in the region as well as the world. The RCN has also been enhancing its capabilities through national and international exercising, training, exchanging experiences and best practices in order to upgrade human resources capability for interoperability and harmony. Especially, the RCN has been actively participating in international activities including the framework of the ASEAN Navy Chiefs' Meeting (ANCM), the framework of the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF), ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise (ARNEX), International Fleet Review (IFR) and other international activities such as the upcoming ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise.

Cambodia has developed maritime security policy and has taken part in a number of initiatives to develop the global maritime policy. In particular, the NCMS and RCN express their fullest commitment and support to any effort or initiative with the objectives to promote cooperation for maintaining regional maritime peace, security, stability, prosperity and sustainable development.



III. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is the first region-wide Asia-Pacific multilateral forum for official consultations on peace and security issues. An outgrowth of the annual ARF activities, with the participation of 10 ASEAN member states plus 17 partners. The ARF provides a setting for discussion and diplomacy and the development of cooperative responses to regional Security issues. The principle and modalities of dialogue and cooperation fostered by the ARF, such as mutual respect, dialogue on an equal footing, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs together with the cooperative security concept, are increasingly accepted by countries in the region.

The uniqueness of the ARF is that the forum serves as an effective platform where regular collaboration and meetings between military and civil elements in the region take place. The ARF continues to be the most comprehensive multilateral security forum in the region. As an active and responsible ARF member, Cambodia is contributing to regional peace and stability and supporting the development of a more robust, rules-based regional order, while upholding the central role of ASEAN in any ASEAN-Led Forums, Cambodia will also continue to make valuable contribution to the forum through its continuous active participation, contributing ideas and initiatives in many ARF activities, including co-charing various ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings with other ARF member states.

III. Others

Clarification on the reference to the NAMRU-2 Project in Cambodia

Cambodia would like to clarify that Cambodia has never had any cooperation project with the US Naval Medical Research Unit 2 Detachment (NAMRU-2), comparable to those said to be in operation in other countries. In 1998, the Ministry of Health of Cambodia had a cooperation project with NAMRU-2 on “Vector Control Program for communicable diseases, especially malaria and dengue fever”. This project ended the following year and was not deemed relevant for further renewal, thanks to significant improvement of Cambodia's capacity.



After 45 years as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner, and as a founding member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Canada is firmly committed to the principle of ASEAN centrality and to the region's security and prosperity. Increasingly active engagement within the ARF is vital to Canada's efforts across the Indo-Pacific region.

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Greater economic integration in the Indo-Pacific region is creating prosperity and new opportunities for development, but also competition and uncertainty with respect to international norms underpinning the rules-based international order and the architecture that will support peace and prosperity well into the 21st century.

The Indo-Pacific region, with a strong ASEAN at its core, is important to Canada. As a Pacific country, we deeply value a secure, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific region that allows for regular engagement and trade with our Asian partners. Canada's economic and people-to-people ties with Asia run deep, and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) now in force and a potential Canada-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement currently being discussed, will strengthen those ties and make our societies stronger. As such, it is in our collective interest to ensure the safety, security and free flow of lawful commerce in the maritime domain, including in the East and South China Seas. Canada recognizes the importance of respect for international law and internationally accepted rules, standards and norms of behaviour—including those outlined in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Canada recognizes the need to bolster regional connectivity through infrastructure development and supports efforts to boost connectivity in a way that is transparent, makes use of responsible debt financing practices, respects the environment, and ensures respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the rule of law.

1. Korean Peninsula

North Korea's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missile programs are a violation of UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and remain one of the most critical threats to regional and international peace and security. Canada continues to call on North Korea to completely, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle its WMD and missile programs, and to avoid any further provocations. Canada is deeply concerned by North Korea's repeated testing of ballistic missiles throughout January 2022. Given the significant implications of this threat for the region, Canada believes that this issue should be a central focus of the ARF's work, including at all relevant inter-sessional meetings.

Furthermore, Canada firmly believes that dialogue and diplomacy represent the only path to security, stability and economic prosperity for the North Korean people, and strongly supports the United States and South Korea in their efforts to strengthen diplomatic engagement with North Korea in order to pursue denuclearization and reduce the risk of conflict.

Canada believes that the implementation of the UNSC sanctions is critical to pressure the North Korean regime to denuclearize. Canada has also imposed comprehensive autonomous sanctions under the Special Economic Measures Act, which includes a ban on all trade with North Korea, with limited humanitarian exemptions. Canada is participating in a multinational effort to curb sanctions evasion activities at sea, with the deployment of Canadian Armed Forces ships, aircraft and personnel. Canada is committed to working with ARF members and the broader international community to ensure effective and coordinated implementation of sanctions against North Korea.

Canada calls on North Korea to stop engaging in malicious cyber activities and to abide by the norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace. Canada continues to call for humanitarian access, noting the lack of delivery of humanitarian assistance and access by trusted humanitarian organizations since North Korea's decision to close its borders in response to the pandemic. Since 2005, Canada has provided over \$40.4 million in humanitarian assistance funding through international organizations to address urgent needs in North Korea. Canada also remains gravely concerned by North Korea's human rights violations and the basic denial of freedoms of North Korean citizens. Canada is also funding two projects being implemented by CRDF Global (overall \$3.4 million) that, inter alia, provide training on counter-proliferation finance and counter-cybercrime for central banks and regulators in Southeast Asia. This training aims to address UNSC Resolution sanctions evasion activities by the DPRK.

2. Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Terrorism and violent extremism affect all of us. Violent extremism is a global and a collective challenge that requires a whole of society effort to prevent and counter, including the direct engagement of civil society.

Canada believes that effective and sustainable counter-terrorism (CT) and counter-violent extremism (CVE) measures require a global approach, combining domestic and international efforts. These efforts must be guided by the principles of respect for human rights and the rule of law, and be driven by partnerships. Such approaches should also be evidence-based and gender-responsive. They must build on local strengths and capabilities in order to foster sustainable resilience to violent extremism among those affected.

Canada advocates for a coordinated, global civilian-led approach to CT and P/CVE that safeguards democracy, human rights, the international rules-based order, and integrates gender considerations and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda into CT and P/CVE initiatives.

Canada's CT efforts link domestic and international efforts, including intelligence, policing, criminal justice, diplomatic, military, development and capacity building. Canada supports international efforts to CT and prevent and counter violent extremism, encompassing not only security-based CT measures but also preventive steps to address the underlying conditions that drive individuals to join violent extremist groups. Terrorism and violent extremism are global problems, not tied to any particular religion, ethnicity or ideology. Canada strongly supports the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.



Canada maintains strong bilateral relationships and is active in a number of international forums in addressing issues related to CT and P/CVE. These include the UN, the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) which Canada currently co-chairs with Morocco, the G7 Roma Lyon Group, the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Canada continues to support the Global Coalition against Da'esh in its military and civilian-led efforts in Iraq and Syria. Under Canada's whole-of-government Middle East Strategy, Canada has provided over \$3.5 billion in funding to respond to the crises in Iraq and Syria, and address their impact on the region. While the Coalition has succeeded in the territorial defeat of Da'esh in the region, Da'esh remains an insurgent threat and continues to exploit instability in Iraq and Syria.

The pandemic has affected the nature of the threat that terrorist and violent extremist groups pose to our society. Restrictions on travel have had a positive impact on the number of terrorist acts in the past twelve months, with exception to the African continent who saw an increase. However, the global pandemic has led to more vulnerable populations, many of which are isolated and spending more time online. Violent extremist groups have taken advantage of the pandemic to increase the spread of online misinformation, conspiracy theories and hateful propaganda and rhetoric, to recruit and inspire individuals to carry out acts of violence.

Canada is deeply concerned with the rise of ideologically-motivated violent extremism (IMVE), both at home and abroad. IMVE threat actors operate in a decentralized manner and pose a challenge to law enforcement because they exist primarily on the web, making it difficult to identify them in the real world.

Canada will continue to build on its partnerships domestically and internationally to counter the threats posed by terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. Addressing the underlying conditions conducive to such threats is essential.

3. South China Sea

With an estimated one-third of global shipping passing through the South China Sea (SCS) annually, tensions are threatening regional stability and security, with the potential to disrupt the global economy. The SCS is also rich in fish stocks and oil and gas reserves, fuelling competition over fishing rights and offshore energy exploration. Canada is concerned about China's escalatory and destabilizing activities in the East and South China Seas. This includes the militarization of disputed features; the use of naval, coast guard and maritime militia vessels to intimidate and threaten the ships of other states; and the unilateral declaration of administrative authority over the Spratly and Paracel Islands. Canada opposes all unilateral actions that escalate tensions and undermine stability and the rules-based international order. Canada places great importance on lawful commerce, navigation and overflight rights, as well as the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of coastal states in the South China Sea, exercised in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS. These fundamental principles are essential to a secure, stable and prosperous maritime region. Canada stands ready to contribute to initiatives that build confidence and help restore trust in the region.

Canada is also concerned that tensions have impeded regional cooperation in protection of the marine environment in the SCS.

Canada continues to urge that China and ASEAN Member States make concerted efforts to implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC). Canada recognizes efforts made by ASEAN Member States and China to develop a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea. We encourage transparency in the negotiations. Canada is of the view that such a Code should be in the spirit of what was agreed to in the DOC and be binding, consistent with international law, and without prejudice to the rights of third parties. Despite diplomatic negotiations on a COC, Canada notes a continued deterioration of the security situation in recent years, caused by increasing militarization of disputed features in the Spratlys and the Paracels. Canada urges all sides to take steps to de-escalate by removing military assets from disputed features and engaging in good-faith negotiations with a view to managing or resolving disputes in accordance with international law.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

Canada is committed to strengthening peace and security and to enhancing its defence relations and engagement in the Indo-Pacific. In June 2017, the Government of Canada released its defence policy, “Strong, Secure, Engaged” (SSE). Through this policy, the Government of Canada directs the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to deepen engagement with the Indo-Pacific region and ASEAN. In particular, SSE directs DND/CAF to have a more consistent, predictable, and sustainable presence in the region, including through seeking membership in the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting – Plus (ADMM+) and via increased participation in ASEAN Regional Forum events.

Since then, Canada has taken steps consistent with this direction, including increased contributions to the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula, through personnel contributions to United Nations Command, and consistent participation in regional humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief efforts. Canada has also taken concrete steps to strengthen defence relations and cooperation with partners in the Indo-Pacific, including by expanding its network of defence attaché offices, establishing a more enduring regional naval presence, and increasing its regional military contributions, notably through Operation NEON, which supports international monitoring of North Korean sanctions evasion activities. In recent years, Canada has increased its participation in regional military exercises and high-level defence forums, such as the Shangri-La Dialogue, Fullerton Forum, and the ASEAN Regional Forum, and has moved to establish new Memorandums of Understanding and Terms of Reference with several ASEAN countries to support the deepening of defence cooperation. Canada has also begun initiating defence policy and military staff talks with some ASEAN partners and will seek to expand staff talks and defence dialogues with additional ASEAN members in due course.

Canada’s defence policy also reaffirms our commitment to capacity building projects and mutual education, training and assistance. The Military Training and Cooperation Program (MTCP) supports cooperative, non-lethal training and military professional development activities across the region that enhance interoperability, expand and reinforce Canadian bilateral defence relations, and promote Canadian democratic principles, the rule of law and the protection of human rights. The MTCP offers training in broad categories such as language, staff officer,



peace support operations and professional development. There are 13 MTCP members within the Indo-Pacific region, with over 3,500 candidates in this region having received sponsored training to-date. In 2019-2020, DND trained 305 personnel from the Indo-Pacific region. The COVID-19 pandemic paused much of MTCP's activities, both inside and outside of Canada, throughout 2020-2021. As a result, DND contributed lower than normal figures in 2020-2021, training 42 personnel in the Indo-Pacific region. The program has since adapted to delivering a selection of courses and training via distance learning for the time being. Once conditions allow, bilateral training courses hosted in Indo-Pacific countries will resume. DND will continue using the MTCP to build and reinforce partnerships with Indo-Pacific countries and support Canada's engagement objectives across the region. In Canada's 2020-2021 fiscal year, Canadian federal government departments, including the Department of National Defence, incurred a total of CA\$31,289 million in defence-related expenditures.

Detailed information on Canada's military expenditure return is available below. Figures are reported in millions of Canadian dollars (CA\$).

Table 1. Canada's FY 2020-2021 military expenditure in millions of Canadian dollars (CA\$) (DND)

Resource Costs	Strategic Forces	Land	Navy	Air Force	Other military forces	Central support administration and command	UN Peace-keeping	Military Assistance and Cooperation	Emergency Aid to Civilians	Undistributed	Total
1. Personnel	-	4,768.4	1,942.4	2,670.5	741.8	5,368.4	1.5	1.8	-	-	15,494.7
1.1 Conscripts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.2 Active Military Personnel	-	2,889.8	1,059.2	1,707.1	457.2	2,169.7	1.2	-	-	-	8,284.2
1.3 Reserves	-	341.3	97.6	110.5	23.7	322.6	0.3	-	-	-	896.0
1.4 Civilian Personnel	-	394.0	378.8	188.5	89.1	1,973.4	-	1.8	-	-	3,025.6
1.5 Military Pensions	-	1,143.4	406.7	664.3	171.8	902.6	-	-	-	-	3,288.9
2. Operations And Maintenance	-	1,463.3	1,460.2	2,154.2	366.1	4,371.7	7.3	2.6	-	-	9,825.5
2.1 Materials For Current Use	-	440.1	398.2	383.0	101.6	394.6	1.8	-	-	-	1,719.4
2.2 Maintenance And Repair	-	195.0	326.6	1,058.5	1.9	180.8	-	-	-	-	1,762.8
2.3 Purchased Services	-	724.0	588.0	653.1	185.9	1,586.8	2.7	0.1	-	-	3,740.7
2.4 Other	-	104.2	147.5	59.6	76.7	2,209.4	2.8	2.4	-	-	2,602.7
3. Procurement And Construction (Investments)	-	1,116.2	1,933.4	1,315.8	100.5	1,302.0	-	-	-	-	5,768.0
3.1 Procurement	-	596.5	1,785.9	1,141.1	98.8	1,189.1	-	-	-	-	4,811.4



Resource Costs	Strategic Forces	Land	Navy	Air Force	Other military forces	Central support administration and command	UN Peace-keeping	Military Assistance and Cooperation	Emergency Aid to Civilians	Undistributed	Total
3.1.1 Aircraft And Engines	-	-	-	1,013.3	-	13.4	-	-	-	-	1,026.7
3.1.2 Missiles, Including Conventional Warheads	-	-	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.4
3.1.3 Nuclear Warheads And Bombs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.1.4 Ships And Boats	-	-	1,583.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,583.0
3.1.5 Armoured Vehicles	-	192.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	192.1
3.1.6 Artillery	-	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.4
3.1.7 Other Ordnance And Ground Force Weapons	-	5.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.9
3.1.8 Ammunition	-	231.0	6.3	12.4	10.3	0.1	-	-	-	-	260.2
3.1.9 Electronics And Communications	-	54.4	43.1	7.1	-	202.4	-	-	-	-	306.9
3.1.10 Non-Armoured Vehicles	-	32.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32.0
3.1.11 Other	-	80.8	153.1	108.3	88.5	973.2	-	-	-	-	1,403.8
3.2 Construction		519.7	147.5	174.8	1.7	112.9	-	-	-	-	956.6
3.2.1 Air Bases, Airfields		-	-	105.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	105.9
3.2.2 Naval Bases And Facilities		-	145.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	145.5
3.2.3 Electronics Facilities		1.6	-	9.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.7
3.2.4 Personnel Facilities		-	-	-	-	43.4	-	-	-	-	43.4
3.2.5 Training Facilities		7.5	0.4	-	-	17.4	-	-	-	-	25.3
3.2.6 Other		510.6	1.6	59.7	1.7	52.1	-	-	-	-	625.7
4. Research And Development		2.5	0.4	3.3	18.3	176.2	-	-	-	-	200.8
4.1 Basic And Applied Research		-	0.4	-	-	2.0	-	-	-	-	2.4
4.2 Development, Testing And Evaluation		2.5	0.1	3.3	18.3	174.2	-	-	-	-	198.4
5. Total (1+2+3+4)		7,350.5	5,336.5	6,143.8	1,226.8	11,218.2	8.8	4.4	-	-	31,289.0



1. National Contributions to Regional Security

i. Counterterrorism

The global terrorist threat is diverse and complex. It demands a comprehensive and coordinated international response based on common goals, values and institutions. It also demands a response that is consistent with international legal obligations, including international human rights and humanitarian law. Canada's multi-pronged approach to counter violent extremism and terrorism includes diplomacy, intelligence, security and law enforcement, customs and immigration, transportation, justice and finance expertise. Canada is also committed to integrating gender considerations and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda into counter-terrorism efforts to ensure that our approach is consistent with our commitments under the Feminist International Assistance Policy and guided by key principles including equality, non-discrimination, participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability.

Canada is of the view that global counter-terrorism efforts must put more emphasis on preventing and countering the spread of violent extremism, rather than only reacting to the actions of terrorists. The UN Secretary-General is seeking to drive forward the international community through his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Canada supports this initiative both domestically and internationally.

In June 2017, Canada launched the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence (Canada Centre). As a centre of excellence, the Canada Centre provides national policy leadership, supports local level initiatives, and coordinates action-oriented research on countering radicalization to violence. Its mandate is to support the prevention of radicalization to violence of all kinds, regardless of where it originates. To support this work, the Canada Centre is engaging broadly with communities, municipalities, provinces, law enforcement, non-governmental organization, and other stakeholders across Canada to: develop relationships built on trust; increase the overall understanding of radicalization to violence; encourage open and transparent discussions; and inform programming, research and policy priorities.

The security of the Indo-Pacific region is inextricably linked to that of ARF partner countries, and Canada is committed to working with those partners to counter terrorist activity. Southeast Asia therefore continues to be a priority region for Canada's Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP). Since 2015, CTCBP has supported a number of counter-terrorism capacity building projects in the region totalling over CAD \$18 million.

CTCBP programming has focused on regional efforts throughout Southeast Asia, with a particular emphasis on advancing regional security cooperation amongst ASEAN member states. In order to effectively address terrorist threats in the region, CTCBP has focused programming efforts on border security, countering the financing of terrorism, legislative and judicial support, countering violent extremism, stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, and strengthening law enforcement agencies across ASEAN member states.

For example, CTCBP is funding UNODC to develop legislation to combat the movement of foreign terrorist fighters and enhance national counter-terrorism legislation to conform to international human rights principles, norms and standards. This work also supports the implementation of UNSCR 2178 on fighting terrorism.



Through CTCBP, Canada is also providing support to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Cambodia to enhance border security, in hopes of reducing threats posed by transnational organized crime and terrorist activity. The project will provide regular training programs to increase and strengthen national and sub-national immigration and border police units to minimize, track and respond to any type of unlawful movement.

Multilaterally, CTCBP has also supported a number of initiatives, including INTERPOL Special Notices training, as well as investigation, forensic collection skills building, and identifying and tracking foreign fighters moving to/from conflict areas. As a key example, CTCBP has provided funding for INTERPOL's Project SUNBIRD since 2017, to enhance the capacity of enforcement agencies across ASEAN through targeted border and counter-terrorism training. SUNBIRD activities to prevent and counter terrorism threats have been a successful collaboration among policing professionals from a wide range of specialties across ASEAN member countries. Recently concluded, this project reached approximately 400 law enforcement professionals across ASEAN. A total of 13 weeks of training on the use of INTERPOL's Policing Capabilities was delivered, including 207 law enforcement officials, of which 57 (28%) were female.

The nature and extent of training under SUNBIRD has contributed to increased capabilities of ASEAN law enforcement officers to detect persons of interest and respond to threats when employing INTERPOL tools. For example, a Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) training course was delivered in direct response to a request made by the Royal Thai Police (RTP). Separate training was also initiated for other ASEAN countries. These combined activities saw 54 officers in the region trained on INTERPOL international standards in DVI.

In line with Project SUNBIRD's women in policing objectives, nearly 40% of the officers trained were female. Forensic monitoring visits to all ten ASEAN member states were conducted over a ten-month period. The purpose of these visits was to encourage units in using and populating INTERPOL Forensic Databases. This has resulted in increased fingerprint submissions by countries into INTERPOL databases. Two training activities were also dedicated to enhance the leadership competencies of women in law enforcement, reaching over 40 female officers across ASEAN law enforcement. The project's Operational Component contributed to ASEAN countries developing their border-management security through INTERPOL, with all ASEAN countries now having some form of integration with INTERPOL databases.

Nothing the importance of combatting violent extremism, CTCBP is also supporting countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts at the regional, national, and local levels through Southeast Asia. These efforts include examining the push and pull factors affecting at-risk refugee communities towards violent extremist groups, advancing countries' capacity to prevent radicalisation in prisons, and enhancing evidenced-based policy-making and strategy formulation in countering terrorism and violent extremism.

For example, CTCBP is working in the Philippines with Big Bad Boo Studios Inc. on implementing the 1001 Nights Life Skills Civic Education Program (LSCE). It is a multi-platform educational entertainment program that uses cartoons to teach 6 to 12-year old children life skills and civic values, including non-violence, human rights, democracy, gender equality and the rule of law, in formal and informal learning environments.



The project will be:

1. making youth more resilient to extremist narratives;
2. providing the Department of Education (DepEd) with a powerful and effective program that can be scaled for preventing violent extremism (PVE) - directly responding to the National Commission on CT's Peace Education priorities;
3. providing teachers and the DepEd with increased capacity to teach and inculcate values that have a proven track record of reducing vulnerability; and
4. providing the DepEd with Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) instruments that will be used during the program, and can be used thereafter, to identify communities and schools that have high degrees of vulnerability. BBB and partners will provide 1001 Nights materials for 100,000 students, 3,500 teachers and 100 schools (school kits and audiovisual equipment). As well, 30 master trainers and 3,500 teachers are trained on the 1001 Nights Civic and Peace Education Program (including teaching pedagogies that promote inclusion and gender equality) with the program is implemented in 100 schools.

Many of the CTCBP funded efforts, particularly those implemented by RCMP, have been delivered at the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC). This unique regional training hub supports ARF member states to collaborate and develop skills to effectively counter terrorist threats throughout the region, and beyond.

In addition to supporting the ARF, Canada works actively within a number of international arenas addressing new and emerging challenges and developing best practices and international standards to combat terrorism. These include the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC); the G7; the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), of which Canada is currently a Co-Chair with Morocco; the Organization of American States (OAS), where Canada chaired the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism from 2014-2015; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); and the United Nations. Canada also has strong bilateral relationships with a number of key partners to address critical issues related to terrorism.

ii. Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Canada's approach to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament (NACD) is grounded in its steadfast commitment to the rules-based international order. International peace and security is a priority for Canada, as a means to provide stability and prosperity for all, and as such Canada will continue to defend and promote non-proliferation, counter-proliferation and arms control, including in the ASEAN region. Canada is an active State Party to the major international NACD treaties and will continue to work with ARF partners to promote the universalisation and full and effective implementation of such treaties and instruments. These include: the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Arms Trade Treaty, Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, Chemical Weapons Convention, Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Treaty), Convention on Cluster Munitions, and other arrangements such as The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and the Missile Technology Control Regime. In addition, Canada continues to be a strong proponent of measures to prevent non-state actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, including UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 and its successor resolution (UNSCR 1977), and the Proliferation Security Initiative. Canada also continues to advocate for the immediate



commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT).

In support of these NACD priorities, Canada's feminist foreign policy recognises that maintaining international peace and security requires an inclusive approach that considers the perspectives of all persons, and that gender balance and gender considerations have a positive impact on the achievement of the shared goals across the international non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. As a strong proponent of gender equality and women's leadership in peace and security, Canada is a champion of Action Item 36 of the United Nations Secretary-General's Implementation Plan for the Agenda for Disarmament on the full and equal participation of women in decision-making processes.

Canada promotes these priorities with partners through its Weapons Threat Reduction Program (WTRP), which is Canada's flagship contribution to the G7-led Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The WTRP's programming is closely coordinated with the ASEAN Secretariat and its member states to enhance the security of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons and related materials in the region, including through the ARF. The ASEAN region is vulnerable to CBRN trafficking owing, inter alia, to its geography, role as a transportation nexus, lack of advanced export controls in certain nations, extremist groups active in the region, and the presence of improperly secured radioactive sources as well as endemic diseases, both with potential to be weaponized.

Since 2011, the WTRP has delivered more than \$50M in programming to ASEAN and its member states to counter threats posed by CBRN weapons and related materials. These activities have focused on: strengthening biological safety and security; increasing disease surveillance capabilities; providing physical protection security upgrades to facilities housing nuclear and radiological material; building the competencies of nuclear security personnel in the region by establishing and enhancing Nuclear Security Support centres to provide hands-on learning experiences; and building partner capacity to meet international obligations set out in UNSCR 1540. Key efforts include the Mitigation of Biological Threats in the ASEAN Region (MBT) Programme, a highly successful collaboration between the WTRP, the ASEAN Secretariat, and ASEAN member states to build capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to naturally occurring, accidental, and deliberate biological threats (\$25 million since 2013). The WTRP has also provided over \$23 million to support global efforts to address North Korea's weapons of mass destruction proliferation activities, including building international capacity for effective sanctions enforcement, and is supporting efforts to train and equip the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) to better manage CBRN threats and incidents.

The health-security capacity that Canada has helped to build in the ASEAN region has meaningfully strengthened the abilities of ASEAN partners to respond to all manner of biological threats, including COVID-19. This includes support to the ASEAN Emergency Operations Center Network (led by Malaysia), the ASEAN Plus Three Laboratory Network, and the ASEAN BioDiaspora Virtual Centre (led by the Philippines with support from Singapore) which combines artificial intelligence, public health, medical expertise and advanced data analytics to assess the risks of importation and spread of COVID-19, and is developing national mitigation, preparedness and response measures. Building on this longstanding partnership, Canada's WTRP provided additional support to ASEAN partners



to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, including: the provision of more than 10 million items of personal protective equipment (PPE) to ASEAN Member states, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) (valued over \$43.5 million); the provision of COVID-19 diagnostic kits and related training to Cambodia, Malaysia, and the Philippines (through an over \$900,000 contribution to the IAEA); financial support for the Institut Pasteur du Laos to acquire PPE and other critical equipment and supplies, and a further in-kind contribution of PPE, valued at over CAD39 million to ASEAN member states, the ASEAN Secretariat and the AHA Centre. This was complemented with Canada's commitment of \$3.5 million to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund.

Canada considers the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. As we approach the 10th NPT Review Conference, Canada remains committed to reinforcing and strengthening the NPT and its review process, including in collaboration with ARF partners, in particular those who are, like Canada, also members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) and the Stockholm Initiative.

In addition, Canada supports the contribution of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs), such as the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ), to regional security and nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Canada welcomes efforts aimed at securing the signatures of P5 States to the SEANWFZ Protocol.

Canada continues to make concrete contributions to strengthen nuclear and radiological security worldwide, including in Southeast Asia, to support efforts to prevent the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological material, to secure radioactive material in use, storage or transport, to strengthen the physical security of nuclear facilities, to support the development of national legal frameworks, and to enhance domestic nuclear security regimes. This support is channeled through contributions by Canada's WTRP to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund and through partnerships with implementing partners. The most recent project undertaken in the region supports security system upgrades to medical facilities housing on-site high activity radioactive sources in both Thailand and Malaysia. This project builds on previous physical protection upgrades to nuclear facilities in both countries, and will include related security training for personnel at the sites. In April 2021, Canada also initiated a \$2.1 million project with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) to enhance law enforcement and state intelligence agency capacities in preventing the illicit trafficking of nuclear or radiological material in Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, and Vietnam, specifically through national training exercises focused on best practices for information sharing, and activities to foster regional cooperation.

Canada is pleased to have been the inaugural chair of the Nuclear Security Contact Group (NSCG), which aims to implement nuclear security commitments, identify ways of addressing new and emerging threats, and maintain momentum on enhancing global nuclear security. The NSCG currently includes a number of ASEAN members, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam. Hungary succeeded Jordan as the Convener in September 2018. The NSCG welcomes new members to the Contact Group to enhance geographic representation, including in the Southeast Asian region.



Acknowledging the role of nuclear technology to meet the increasing energy demands of states and in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Canada supports the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in a safe and secure manner, notably through full cooperation with the IAEA. Canada strongly believes that implementation of the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol constitute the current safeguards verification standard. Through signing and ratifying the Additional Protocol, ARF members and Dialogue Partners can support transparency and confidence in the peaceful nature of their nuclear applications. Canada has consistently supported efforts to assist states to build capacity to fully implement the Additional Protocol and believes that the ARF can also work to promote its universal implementation in the Indo-Pacific region.

iii. Transnational Crime

Canada is committed to working with Indo-Pacific partners, including through the ARF, the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOM-TC), and the Bali Process, to counter threats to governance and stability arising from the activities of transnational crime groups in the region, including cybercrime. Frequently linked to organized crimes are trafficking networks, including trafficking in persons, illicit drugs and/or firearms, migrant smuggling, money laundering, and wildlife trafficking, which underscore the transnational dimension of these challenges. Through the Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program, (ACCBP) Canada currently supports 14 projects to address these threats, valued at over CAD \$15M.

Migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons are particular areas of concern. Canada is currently an observer nation to the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Organised Crime with a particular interest in the trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling element of its mandate. Canada will also seek full membership in the Bali Process at its next Ministerial meeting, delayed to 2022 due to the pandemic. In the meantime, Canada remains an active observer and regularly participates in the various Bali Process working groups and the Ad Hoc Group Senior Officials Meetings.

Through the ACCBP, Canada also works with regional partners to address these issues, often in coordination with international organizations such as the UNODC, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and INTERPOL. The ACCBP Human Smuggling Envelope has a total funding of CAD\$8.5 million per year to deliver capacity-building support to law enforcement, criminal justice, and border security officials to prevent, deter and respond to human smuggling networks in Southeast Asia and other regions of the world. This includes providing technical assistance, equipment and training to assist countries in the region to strengthen border security through enhancing the capacity of front-line officials to identify fraudulent travel documentation, to increase the participation of women in police forces, to improve cyber resilience to combat transnational crime, as well as to improve regional collaboration on border management and human smuggling investigations.

Canada is also a regular contributor to the annual International Narcotics Control Board Conference on Precursor Chemicals and New Psychoactive Substances (NPS). This conference is focused on practical measures countries can take to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals and trafficking of NPS. The Conference is held annually in Thailand, which recognizes the specific challenges faced by the region with respect to NPS trafficking and precursor diversion.



In response to the opioid crisis, Canada, through the ACCBP, has recently signed onto the UNODC's global response to the Opioid Crisis – UNODC Opioid Strategy project. This initiative aims to build the capacity of beneficiary law enforcement, forensic laboratories and border control agencies officers to predict, prevent, and protect against the challenges posed by synthetic opioids. This will be achieved through the provision of equipment and training of law enforcement and border control officers in Latin America and Asia.

Finally, the ACCBP has been reviewing potential cybercrime and cybersecurity projects in the region and is currently supporting three regional cyber projects being implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House). These projects seek to improve cyber resilience in the ASEAN countries through increased understanding of the measures needed in preventing and prosecuting cybercrime, develop information sharing networks between ASEAN stakeholders, and create a more inclusive process at the UN cybercrime negotiations by supporting civil society organizations to facilitate their meaningful participation.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

The increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters underscores the importance of strengthening practical cooperation among Indo-Pacific partners on disaster preparedness and response. Canada continues to be an active contributor to humanitarian relief efforts in the region, by providing timely, effective, coordinated and needs-based assistance, and working closely with partners in the region to enhance cooperation, coordination, and awareness. Ongoing discussions on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) issues can serve to improve the delivery of such capabilities in the future, particularly in a region which will likely see ARF members respond to the same disaster.

Reiterating the importance of enhancing our response mechanisms through close collaboration and exchange of best practices, Canada is co-chairing the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ARF ISM-DR), together with Lao PDR and China, until 2022. Canada continues to reiterate the importance of finding synergies between the numerous disaster relief initiatives in the region, and to underline the importance of adopting a gender-sensitive approach in all aspects of disaster management, from preparedness through responses and recovery. Likewise, Canada encourages all ARF members to adopt a more proactive approach to collaboration, communications, planning and execution for the effective and strategic delivery of disaster relief assistance.

Moreover, Canada is pleased to be a member of the Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia-Pacific and considers that the Group represents a valuable forum to share best practices on civilian-military cooperation in disaster response and to improve predictability and interoperability in the region.

Canada recognizes the leadership that countries in the region are demonstrating in undertaking significant disaster risk reduction efforts. These efforts are enhancing preparedness and strengthening capacity to respond when disasters strike. Canada supports the ASEAN's efforts to provide a forum for the advancement of regional initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of natural hazards on populations in the area.



With the number of engagements related to disaster response in the region, Canada looks forward to working with ARF partners to better assess opportunities for synergies between the ARF and other mechanisms, including the RCG, EAS, and ADMM+, that strengthen ASEAN capabilities and advance local approaches to disaster response and risk reduction.

v. Maritime Security

As a Pacific nation, Canada is committed to contributing to maritime security, upholding international law, and preserving peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific alongside our ARF partners. Canada strongly supports continued ARF engagement on maritime security, including with respect to countering WMD proliferation and illicit trafficking. ARF cooperation on maritime security issues will continue to support the region's security and prosperity by ensuring the efficient and secure movement of goods and people through strategic corridors.

Since the identification of maritime security as one of ARF's four key areas, ARF members, including Canada, have developed projects focused on enhanced information sharing and best practices, confidence building measures based on international and regional legal frameworks, and capacity building support to regional maritime law enforcement agencies. For example, through its ACCBP, Canada is supporting UNODC in implementing a two-year project aiming to increase the capacity of Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand to respond to maritime human smuggling through strengthened coordinated maritime law enforcement responses.

Canada regularly deploys military warships, aircraft, and personnel to work with our allies and partners in the region. For example, Canada deploys warships to the Indo-Pacific region under Canada's Operation PROJECTION (Indo-Pacific) to promote maritime security, freedom of navigation and mutual trust. When deployed, the Royal Canadian Navy regularly conducts port visits and participates in cooperative deployments and multinational exercises, such as the US-hosted biennial multinational Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise. Canada also supports multinational United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sanctions monitoring efforts by deploying staff, warships and maritime patrol aircraft to Canada's Operation NEON.

In 2021, Canada deployed two frigates to the Indo-Pacific – HMCS CALGARY and HMCS WINNIPEG – which conducted a number of port visits in the region, including in Brunei, the Philippines, Vietnam and Singapore. These warships also conducted two cooperative deployments, including with Brunei and Indonesia. This shows our enduring commitment to promoting regional maritime security, to strengthening security partnerships in the region, and to working together to uphold the rules-based international order.

Canada views the Western Pacific Naval Symposium's (WPNS) "Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea" (CUES) as a means by which navies may develop mutually rewarding international cooperation and transparency, and provide leadership and broad-based involvement in establishing international standards in relation to the use of the sea. Canada was pleased to be involved in the development of this code.

Under Operation ARTEMIS, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) contribute to the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF). The CMF is a US-led, 34-nation naval partnership based in Bahrain, which was established in 2001 to combat terrorism and promote maritime security. The CMF,



through its operational flotillas, conducts maritime security operations across 3.2 million square miles of international waters around Eastern Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. The CAF primarily contributes to CMF through Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), one of the CMF's three operational flotillas. CTF 150 conducts maritime security and counter-terrorism operations in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, and the Indian Ocean. The mission allows Canada to: contribute to regional maritime security in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa; maintain a presence in a region of strategic importance, and demonstrate Canadian leadership in multilateral security cooperation while operating alongside key allies and non-traditional partners (i.e. Pakistan, Singapore, and Gulf Cooperation Council countries). In January 2021, Canada took over command of CTF 150 for the fifth time since 2008 for a six-month period and handed over command to New Zealand in July 2021. Under Canadian command, CTF 150 conducted a total of 34 successful boarding operations over a period of six months, leading to the seizure of 55,605 kg (or \$160 million USD) of illicit narcotics – a record haul for the task force.

More broadly, Canada is committed to working with international organizations to meet the security challenges of a complex maritime environment and recognizes the importance of broadening international consensus when addressing these challenges. We are actively engaged in a number of international forums, including the International Maritime Organization and the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum – which brings together experts from maritime safety and security agencies in Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, and the United States. The North Pacific Coast Guard Forum fosters multilateral cooperation and best practices through information sharing on matters related to fisheries enforcement, maritime security, illegal migration, illegal drug trafficking and combined operations.

Civil society and Track II initiatives can also make a useful contribution to developing informed options for regional partners in areas such as regional connectivity and preparedness to address incidents at sea. Canada will continue to support initiatives to organize workshops and seminars in ARF countries on these themes, and will encourage civil society, academics and others to contribute to the discussion by submitting constructive, original and non-zero-sum proposals that can advance solutions for peaceful resolution.

As mentioned under the Terrorism section above, Canada, through the CTCBP is also supporting maritime counterterrorism efforts in four ARF member states (Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam). This regional maritime security project targets national law enforcement agencies in charge of port and maritime security in order to strengthen institutional capacity to combat terrorism, piracy and armed robbery, and reduce the vulnerability of ships and port facilities to security risks.

vi. Cyber (ICT)

The ARF region is susceptible to cyber threats emanating from both state and non-state actors, whether through the theft of intellectual property and sensitive information, the compromise of systems and critical infrastructure, the theft of money, and other malicious activity. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the threat of malicious activity against the health sector, where cyber threats to hospitals and other health care providers have increased, in addition to cyber means being used to spread misinformation related to the pandemic. The pandemic has also highlighted concerns relating to how states seek to censor, control and partition the Internet under the pretext of cyber security and the misuse of cyberspace by criminals.



The ARF first addressed cyber-security issues in 2006 and has been steadily increasing its engagement ever since. The establishment of an Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) in 2016 was undertaken to support the process specifically on ICT (cyber) issues. Canada is working with Indonesia, South Korea and Australia as they Co-Chair from 2021 to 2024.

The ARF has also put in place an Open-Ended Study Group (OESG) on CBMs to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs. The ARF's work on cyber CBMs, including the Establishment of ARF Points of Contact Directory of Security of and in the Use of ICTs, and the Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Consultations Mechanism has been particularly useful.

Canada believes that peace and stability in cyberspace is grounded on the acceptance of the applicability of existing international law, the adoption of norms for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, and the implementation of CBMs. Canada welcomes the efforts undertaken by the ARF to develop and implement CBMs that will enhance transparency and dialogue while reducing the risk of misunderstanding, miscalculation and conflict in cyberspace.

Internationally, Canada collaborates with close allies and a wider coalition of countries that share our vision for a free, open and secure cyberspace that in order to promote can be a vehicle for political, social and economic development, and to counter efforts of repressive regimes to control the Internet and its content.

Canada is continuously working with friends and partners, including the ARF and its participating countries, to enhance cyber security by identifying cyber threats and vulnerabilities, and by preparing to respond to a broad range of cyber incidents.

Canada has also supported regional capacity-building efforts aimed at bolstering the ability of states to respond to and mitigate cyber threats. For instance, Canada supports two projects with the UNODC and INTERPOL valued at \$2.4M and \$1.3M respectively, which seeks to improve the capacity of ASEAN member states to increase cyber resilience to effectively combat transnational crime, including human smuggling facilitated via the darknet and virtual assets. Canada is also contributing \$CAD 1.5 million to a Chatham House led project to increase cyber capacity in the ASEAN countries tailored cyber development programs. The project will also bring stakeholders from several ASEAN countries together to participate in bilateral simulations exercises and one regional simulation, based on a bespoke toolkit, which will test the ability of several ASEAN countries to coordinate a regional response to a large-scale cyber incident and to cooperate amongst each other. Finally, Canada is also supporting another project with Chatham House valued at \$900K, which works to increasing knowledge amongst civil society organizations from around the world on key cybercrime concepts, issues and existing UN processes and establishes a platform that facilitates their input into the UN treaty negotiations on cybercrime.

Canada has agreed to participate in the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE), which involves delivery of capacity-building courses to the ASEAN region. The recently established ASCCE has been limited to delivering online training due to the pandemic, but it can do more. Canada has committed to delivering training on stakeholder engagement in 2022 in conjunction with the EU and New Zealand. Possible areas of further collaboration include conducting research and providing trainings in areas spanning international law, cyber strategy, legislation, cyber norms and other cybersecurity policy issues.



Canada is committed to continuing the collaboration developed within the ARF to support regional confidence-building and help support collective efforts to maintain a free, open, and secure cyberspace. This commitment is re-enforced by Canada's intent to seek a Co-Chair position of the ISM on ICTs when next it becomes available (likely 2024).

vii. Women, Peace and Security, and Peace and Stabilization Operations Program in Asia

Canada recognizes that while everyone is affected, women and men, girls and boys, (including gender non-conforming and intersex persons in all their diversity) experience conflict differently. They bring different perspectives to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Women broaden the agenda beyond that of the warring parties, and the link between their meaningful participation and durable peace agreements has been established. Yet, women are often excluded from formal peace processes. In recognition of this, Canada has been a strong supporter of the Women, Peace and Security agenda from its inception and co-sponsored UNSCR 1325 as a non-permanent member of the body in 2000. Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and security (WPS) guides the efforts of nine federal departments and agencies to implement the agenda both at home and internationally.

Canada is committed to increasing its engagement on WPS in the Indo-Pacific region. In August 2019, Canada led the adoption of the ARF's first Ministerial "Joint Statement on promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum". In March 2021, Canada, Thailand and Indonesia co-chaired the ARF's first workshop on Women, Peace and Security to advance commitments outlined in the Joint Statement. The 3-day workshop hosted over 140 participants, including government officials, civil society, and academic representatives, mainly from the Indo-Pacific Region. The workshop addressed ways to strengthen existing regional coordination mechanisms and mainstream WPS agenda into ARF activities, and develop and advance regional commitments in implementing the WPS agenda. Canada will continue to deepen its engagement in Asia on all fronts, making sure to embed the WPS agenda into all its processes.

In 2021, Canada launched a new 5-year, CAD 8.5 million initiative with ASEAN and UN Women, "Empowering women for sustainable peace: preventing violence and promoting social cohesion in ASEAN – Advancing WPS in ASEAN". This project, which was formally endorsed by the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives, will support ASEAN to build regional and national capacity and become a knowledge hub on WPS. This will be the first multi-year regional project co-created by ASEAN, for ASEAN with all the key ASEAN bodies and actors. To complement this initiative, Canada is supporting the ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) to develop WPS training modules to build regional capacity to implement the WPS agenda and mainstream gender equality in the peace and security sector.

Canada's Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs) is designed to prevent and respond to conflict and crisis abroad. PSOP's approach to stabilization includes targeted efforts to anticipate, prevent and respond to violent conflict and promote long-term stability. PSOPs provides a strong Canadian voice through policy leadership and advocacy, coordinates a whole-of-government response to various conflicts and crises, and provides visible and concrete assistance through targeted programming and expert deployments.



PSOPs current engagement in Southeast Asia totals over \$15 million focuses on peace and stability programming to protect and promote human rights, implement peace agreements, and advance the role of women and youth in the participation and promotion of peace and security.

For example, through the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, Canada is supporting the empowerment of Bangladeshi and Burmese women and youth so they are equipped to lead and participate in community-based peacebuilding and decision-making at local, national, and regional levels. The GNWP is working with representatives of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to strengthen the commitment of Member States to further the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas. In particular, GNWP amplified the recommendations from women and youth for sustainable peace and gender equality in Myanmar to ASEAN and other global policymakers. GNWP plans to implement the first national consultation on the National Action Plan to integrate issues confronted by Rohingya refugee and host community women and girls and advocate for their participation in the implementation in late 2021. In addition, through funding to the Nobel Women's Initiative, Canada recently supported the Women's Peacebuilder Network, which works with grassroots women's organizations and peacebuilders in the Korean Peninsula, and in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, Canadian support to the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) sustains and strengthens the impact of women peacebuilders and organizations. In Afghanistan, with Canadian support, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom works to strengthen alliances by mobilizing men to work with women for peace and to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

In March 2019, UN Women, alongside the UN Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Department of Peace Operations, announced the launch of the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations. The Elsie Initiative Fund is designed to use collective resources to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in UN peace operations, with a focus on police and military roles. It provides flexible funding to countries that contribute troops and police to UN peace operations to increase their deployment of trained and qualified uniformed women. The Fund also includes the provision of the innovative 'Gender Strong Unit Premium,' which is a results-based payment for the deployment of military contingents and Formed Police Units that include the substantial representation of women across all units and functions, and which meet criteria to ensure an adequate work environment. In April 2021, UN Women launched the second programming round, which is currently underway. Canada encourages all troop and police contributing countries in the ASEAN region to consider submitting a letter of interest in the current programming cycle, which is expected to close by 31 July 2021.

To date, the Elsie Initiative Fund has received contributions and pledges of \$27.9M USD toward its \$40M USD fundraising target from Canada (\$17.5M CAD), the United Kingdom, Germany, Finland, Australia, the Netherlands and Norway. With UN Women, Canada currently sits as a co-chair on the Steering Committee. Other seats on the Steering Committee are occupied by the Department of Peace Operations (alternate UN co-chair); the Executive-Office of the Secretary-General; one potential applicant T/PCC (Bangladesh); one major donor country (United Kingdom); and one Contact Group member (Ghana). The three seats that belong to member states rotate every two years. More information is available at www.elsiefund.org.



III. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum

1. National Contributions to the ARF (ASEAN)

The ARF is a key security forum within the Indo-Pacific region and an important component of Canada's engagement in the region's evolving security architecture. We will continue to engage constructively with our partners to build capacity and ensure that the ARF continues to contribute to security and stability in the region as per the action lines of the Hanoi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) and the principles of the 2009 ARF Vision Statement.

Canada has expanded its diplomatic presence across the region and since 2015 has had a resident diplomatic presence in all 10 ASEAN member states. In 2020, defence representation in Malaysia and Vietnam was upgraded to full defence attaché status with the opening of defence attaché offices. Further, Canada's appointment of its first dedicated ASEAN Ambassador in 2016, as well as a standalone mission to ASEAN the same year, demonstrate our strong commitment to ASEAN and engagement with the ARF and our partners in the region.

In the 2020-2021 inter-sessional year, Canada continued to participate in and make significant contributions in a wide range of ARF events and regional security and disaster relief programs despite the constraints to this year's program of events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to hosting the first ARF Workshop on Women, Peace and Security, Canada co-chaired the 19th ARF Intersessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) and the 3rd ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments to Address Emerging Maritime Issues. Canada will also co-chair the ARF Dialogue on Health Security to help ARF Members exchange and share best practices on responding to the global pandemic.

2. The Future of the ARF (ASEAN)

The regularity of exchange facilitated through the ARF is increasingly important to sustaining an atmosphere of cooperation in a region of global strategic importance. In this respect, Canada encourages a pragmatic and cooperative approach to the ARF's work. By delivering concrete initiatives, we can demonstrate the constructive role played by the ARF in the regional security architecture.

Like many of our partners, Canada believes that it is important to build on the ARF's existing work in order to bring greater focus to addressing the region's security challenges. The development of a dedicated Intersessional Meeting (ISM) on cyber security is a positive development that reflects the ARF's ongoing evolution. In that spirit, the ARF could consider streamlining the agenda of the Intersessional Support Group (ISG) to ensure more time is spent on substance by senior officials rather than procedural matters and determine if the ARF framework should be reinvigorated.

As a mature organization and in the spirit of preventive diplomacy, the ARF can continue to provide a forum for active discussion of issues and perspectives without jeopardizing the activities and exchanges that members support. The ARF has been most successful in bringing together policy practitioners and experts to address specialized security issues that require interagency cooperation across borders. Its inclusive membership highlights the importance of the Indo-Pacific region and the interconnected nature of the global security environment.



Canada believes it is essential for the ARF to maintain a global perspective about the evolving security challenges affecting the region, including to condemn with one voice Russia's illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine. The consequences of Russia's egregious violations of international law and the rules-based international order extend well beyond Ukraine's borders, affecting regional and global stability, including in the Indo-Pacific region.

The ARF's success as a convener of security dialogue and cooperation among interagency communities of practitioners, experts and policy makers is complementary to the roles of newer bodies, like the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+). These forums offer positive opportunities for complementary regional dialogue and cooperation, in keeping with the spirit of ASEAN-centrality, which Canada continues to support. In order to better contribute to advancing common approaches to shared policy concerns, Canada remains keenly interested in joining the East Asia Summit. Canada also continues to explore ways to increase its contributions to regional defence and security, including as an Observer in the ADMM+ Expert Working Groups on maritime security and HADR. In the longer term, Canada remains interested in membership in the ADMM+ itself.

Since its inception in 1994, the ARF has become a cornerstone of a burgeoning security community that works together to protect the region's vitality and continued economic growth. In line with the consistent efforts of other ARF members, Canada is committed to playing a positive and constructive role in the continuing evolution of the ARF.



I. Security Situation in the Asia-Pacific

Since 2021, the Asia-Pacific security situation has been evolving at an accelerated pace. Traditional security issues are intertwined with non-traditional ones and new challenges and problems emerge one after another, leading to acute instability and uncertainty. First, certain countries outside the region, clinging to Cold War mentality, have played up competition among major countries, continued to increase military presence in the region, consolidated and expanded military alliance, and pursued unilateral military and strategic advantages, seriously undermining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific. Second, the persistent and intractable hotspot issues in the region have further complicated regional security situation. Third, COVID-19 has kept spreading on a large scale, and bio-security threat has further intensified. Fourth, military application of emerging technologies has developed rapidly, which has impacted the traditional strategic structure and increased the risk of arms race.

At present, changes of the world, of our times and of history are unfolding in ways like never before. These changes are posing challenges that must be taken seriously by humanity. Meanwhile, the pursuit of peace, stability and development remain the common aspiration of most Asia-Pacific countries. Facing such a critical moment for world peace and development, President Xi Jinping put forward the Global Security Initiative (GSI) at the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2022. This Initiative gives explicit answers to questions of our times such as what security concept the world needs and how countries can achieve common security. It contributes China's wisdom to humanity's efforts to tackle the peace deficit, and presents China's solution to addressing international security challenges. China has not only proposed the GSI, but also acted on this major Initiative. Going forward, China will continue to hold high the banner of multilateralism, firmly implement the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind, promote the common values of humanity, and actively advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation and the Global Development Initiative (GDI). China will conduct extensive exchanges and cooperation with other Asia-Pacific countries to jointly improve the global security governance system, work for the settlement of regional hotspot issues through dialogue, and make unremitting efforts for peace, stability, development and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific.

II. China's National Defense Policy and Multilateral Military Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific

China stays committed to the path of peaceful development, and adheres to an independent foreign policy of peace and a national defense policy that is defensive in nature. China pursues a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security in the world, upholds justice while pursuing shared interests, and embraces a global governance vision featuring extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. China resolutely upholds multilateralism, abides by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and actively promotes a new form of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation. China is always a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, and a defender of the international order.

China attaches importance to both development and security, works to build a prosperous nation and a strong military, and pursues coordinated development of national defense and the economy. Following the principle of military development through diligence and thrift, China determines the appropriate scale and structure of defense spending in light of its economic development level and defense needs, and manages and uses defense funds in accordance with law.

China's defense spending is mainly used for personnel allowance, training and maintenance, and equipment. It is open, transparent, reasonable and appropriate. Compared with other major countries, China's defense spending is relatively low in terms of its share in GDP and fiscal spending as well as in per capita terms. It will maintain moderate and steady growth in step with economic development of the country. China's defense budget for 2021 was about US\$209 billion.

In 2021, China's military actively developed constructive relations with foreign militaries, and further consolidated all-dimensional, wide-ranging and multi-tiered military diplomacy. It actively carried out international cooperation against COVID-19, and provided vaccine assistance to the militaries of more than 30 countries including Pakistan, Cambodia, and Laos. It deepened military partnerships with neighboring countries, established defense and security consultation and working meeting mechanisms, and organized a series of joint drills and training for counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, rescue, and multi-service tactical skills, all contributing to enhanced practical cooperation.

The Chinese military has continued to work for the building of a regional security cooperation architecture. It has helped deepen and substantiate defense and security cooperation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), supported the institutional development of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), and actively participated in multilateral dialogue and cooperation mechanisms such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus, China-ASEAN Defense Ministers' Informal Meeting, meeting of chiefs of staff of the armed forces of SCO member states, Sherpa Meeting (Shangri-La Dialogue Preparatory Meeting), ASEAN Defense Officials Meeting Plus, and ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Meeting. It has put forward initiatives to strengthen regional defense and security cooperation in a constructive manner. In late October 2021, the Beijing Xiangshan Forum Webinar was successfully held, where participants had in-depth discussions under the theme of "Pursue Win-Win Cooperation, Advance Global Security Governance".

1. China's Efforts to Promote Security in the Asia-Pacific

In 2021, China continued to enhance dialogue and cooperation with major regional countries and actively participated in regional security cooperation in a joint effort to tackle various kinds of security challenges and cross-border threats. It has made unremitting efforts for regional peace, stability, development and prosperity.



i. Relations with Other Major Countries and Cooperation Mechanisms in the Region

a. China-ASEAN cooperation

China has all along given priority to ASEAN in its neighborhood diplomacy, and firmly supported ASEAN Community building, ASEAN centrality in East Asian regional cooperation, and an even greater role of ASEAN in regional and international affairs.

The year 2021 marked the 30th anniversary of the establishment of China-ASEAN dialogue relations and presented new historical opportunities for their cooperation. On 22 November, President Xi Jinping attended and chaired the Special Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of China-ASEAN Dialogue Relations, and officially announced, together with ASEAN leaders, the elevation of their relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. President Xi Jinping delivered an important speech entitled “For a Shared Future and Our Common Home”, in which he called for jointly building a peaceful, safe and secure, prosperous, beautiful, and amicable home of China and ASEAN, and proposed a series of cooperation initiatives and measures, which were well received by ASEAN leaders. In September, President Xi sent a congratulatory message to the 18th China-ASEAN Expo and China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit held in Nanning, Guangxi. In October, Premier Li Keqiang attended the 24th China-ASEAN Summit, where he made a six-point proposal for China-ASEAN cooperation in the next stage, including jointly building a line of defense for health, deepening economic integration, promoting inclusive development, upholding an innovation-driven approach, expanding green cooperation, and cementing the foundation of popular support. In July, on the 30th anniversary of China-ASEAN dialogue relations, Premier Li Keqiang and State Councilor Wang Yi exchanged congratulatory messages with Sultan Hassanal of Brunei, ASEAN’s rotating chair, and ASEAN Secretary-General Lim Jock Hoi respectively. In May, Premier Li and Sultan Hassanal extended separate congratulatory messages to the inauguration of the China-ASEAN Year of Sustainable Development Cooperation held in Beijing. The two sides also held a series of celebration events, including a special foreign ministers’ meeting, commemorative reception and seminars, to mark the 30th anniversary of China-ASEAN dialogue relations.

China and ASEAN countries have actively advanced COC negotiations and properly handled the South China Sea issue. In June 2021, on the sidelines of the Special China-ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of Dialogue Relations, a senior officials’ meeting on the implementation of the DOC was held, where parties agreed to resume COC text negotiations online. By the end of last year, four rounds of COC negotiations had been held, and the second reading of the text was well underway.

In 2021, the trade volume between China and ASEAN reached US\$878.2 billion, up 28.1% year on year. The two sides were each other’s largest trading partner for two consecutive years. Cooperation in various fields was steadily advanced, and important institutional events were held, including the Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management, Special Session of the Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation, Digital Ministers’ Meeting, Economic and Trade Ministers’ Meeting, Transport Ministers’ Meeting, Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, Defense Ministers’ Informal Meeting, and Culture Ministers’ Meeting.

b. China-Russia relations

In 2021, China-Russia relations stood the tests of changes and a pandemic both unseen in a century, and grew with more vigor and vitality.



Presidents of the two countries charted the course for the growth of bilateral ties through talks, phone calls, and virtual meetings or links. On 19 May 2021, President Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin witnessed via video link the groundbreaking ceremony of the Tianwan Nuclear Power Plant Units 7 and 8 and the Xudapu Nuclear Power Plant Units 3 and 4, which were jointly built by China and Russia. On 28 June, President Xi and President Putin held a virtual meeting, during which the two sides issued a joint statement and officially announced the extension of the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation. President Putin warmly congratulated the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. On 25 August, President Xi had a telephone conversation with President Putin, where they had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral strategic cooperation, all-round practical cooperation and the situation in Afghanistan. On 26 November, the two presidents sent separate congratulatory messages to the closing ceremony of the China-Russia Year of Scientific and Technological Innovation. On 29 November, the two presidents sent separate congratulatory messages to the 3rd China-Russia Energy Business Forum. On 15 December, the two presidents held a virtual meeting to review the new progress of bilateral ties in 2021 and jointly make new plans for cooperation in various fields.

The foreign ministers of the two countries had multiple meetings and phone calls to fully implement the consensus of the two presidents, and to strengthen communication on bilateral relations, anti-COVID cooperation and international and regional issues of shared interest. On 23 March 2021, the two sides issued the Joint Statement by the Foreign Ministers of China and Russia on Certain Aspects of Global Governance in Modern Conditions, which demonstrated their common position on maintaining world peace and geostrategic stability, and on building a more equitable, democratic and reasonable multi-polar international order.

The two sides continued to carry out close anti-COVID cooperation. Joint border prevention and control measures have been implemented to curb the cross-border spread of the virus. Efforts have been made to steadily advance vaccine and drug R&D cooperation, strengthen counterpart exchanges between epidemic prevention agencies, and promote the settlement of specific issues in practical cooperation including cargo customs clearance at ports and personnel exchanges. In 2021, bilateral trade volume hit a record high of US\$146.887 billion, up 35.8% year on year. China remained Russia's largest trading partner for 12 consecutive years.

c. China-US relations

Since taking office in 2021, the Biden administration has generally maintained previous administration's erroneous policy towards China. Describing China as the "most serious competitor", it has continuously interfered in China's internal affairs including issues related to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, Tibet and maritime issues, undermined China's interests, and created various exclusive international groupings against China. In response, China has taken strong measures to firmly defend its own sovereignty, security and development interests and safeguard international equity and justice. At the same time, the two countries maintained communication at the leadership and other levels. President Xi Jinping had a virtual meeting and three calls with President Joe Biden and put forth the three principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation for China and the US to get along in the new era, charting the course for the development of China-US relations.



President Biden stated that the US does not seek a new Cold War with China, it does not aim to change China's system, the revitalization of its alliances is not targeted at China, the US does not support "Taiwan independence", and it has no intention to seek a conflict with China. Both sides agreed that China and the US should strengthen communication and cooperation, properly manage differences, and avoid conflict and confrontation. China takes the US statement seriously and urges the US side to match words with deeds and honor President Biden's five commitments with real actions. Leading officials responsible for foreign affairs, economy and trade, agriculture, health and climate change from the two countries had phone calls or meetings with their counterparts. The two sides issued the China-US Joint Statement on the Climate Crisis and the China-US Glasgow Joint Declaration on Strengthening Climate Action in the 2020s, and maintained communication and coordination on regional and international affairs.

In 2021, China and Japan enjoyed generally stable relations and maintained high-level communication and exchanges. In October 2021, President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang sent congratulatory messages respectively to Fumio Kishida on his election as Japan's prime minister. President Xi Jinping took a phone call from Prime Minister Kishida, and the two leaders reached common understandings on developing a bilateral relationship that answers the call of the new era. In April, State Councilor Wang Yi had a phone call with Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi. In November, State Councilor Wang Yi took a phone call from the newly appointed Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi. In December, State Councilor Wei Fenghe took a video call from Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi. At the same time, the development of China-Japan relations also faced some obstacles and challenges. The main reason is that Japan failed to establish a fact-based and correct perception of China's development, and took some negative moves from time to time on Taiwan, maritime issues, Hong Kong and Xinjiang. China has all along urged Japan to earnestly respect China's core interests and internal affairs, abide by the principles set in the four political documents between China and Japan, and work with China to move the bilateral relations forward along the right track.

Economic cooperation and trade between China and Japan has grown steadily. Japan is China's fourth largest trading partner, and China Japan's largest trading partner. Total trade between China and Japan stood at US\$371.4 billion in 2021. Affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of trips made between China and Japan fell to 246,900 in 2021.

e. China-India relations

China-India relations in 2021 featured both challenges and opportunities. The two countries maintained high-level dialogue and exchanges and conducted coordination and cooperation at bilateral and multilateral levels. In April 2021, President Xi Jinping sent a message of sympathy to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the COVID-19 situation in India. In February and April, State Councilor Wang Yi had two phone calls with Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. In July and September, State Councilor Wang Yi met twice with Foreign Minister Jaishankar in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. In November, State Councilor Wang Yi, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Indian External Affairs Minister Jaishankar held the 18th Meeting of China-Russia-India Foreign Ministers via video link. In 2021, the two sides held three meetings of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on China-India Border Affairs (WMCC) and six rounds of Corps Commander-Level Meeting to maintain



communication on the boundary question through diplomatic and military channels and further ease tension in the border area. The two countries maintained communication and coordination in such mechanisms as the United Nations, BRICS, the G20, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Russia-India-China (RIC) framework.

f. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

The year 2021 marks the 20th anniversary of the SCO. Guided by the “Shanghai Spirit”, the SCO is committed to strengthening good-neighborliness and political trust between regional countries, responding effectively to threats and challenges, and deepening cooperation in security, economy, culture, people-to-people exchanges and other areas. It has made important contribution to regional security and stability and the common development of SCO members.

On 17 September 2021, President Xi Jinping attended via video link the 21st Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State and the Meeting on Afghanistan of the Heads of State of the SCO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Leaders of SCO member states signed and issued the Dushanbe Declaration on the 20th Anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and adopted a series of resolutions. The meeting started the process of admitting Iran as a full member, included Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar as new dialogue partners, and issued a statement on cooperation in scientific and technological innovation and food security. On 25 November, Premier Li Keqiang attended the 20th Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government via video link. The meeting signed and issued a joint communiqué and approved a number of documents and resolutions on SCO cooperation in economy and trade and other fields. On 14 July, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi attended the Meeting of SCO Council of Foreign Ministers in Dushanbe, which made comprehensive preparations for the SCO summit. On the same day, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi attended the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group, which adopted the Joint Statement of Foreign Ministers of SCO Member States on the Results of the Meeting in the Format of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group.

Other SCO events held in 2021 include meetings of national security council secretaries, presidents of supreme courts and procurators-general; meetings of ministers of national defense, justice, economy and trade, agriculture, industry, energy, health, culture and transport; meetings of heads of counter-narcotics, food security, health and pandemic response, tourism and railway departments. These activities have deepened and expanded SCO cooperation in various fields. China has taken an active part in those activities, and worked for new and continued progress in SCO cooperation.

ii. Cooperation in the fields of non-traditional security

a. Cooperation on disaster relief

In 2021, China actively promoted multilateral and bilateral cooperation on disaster relief in the Asia-Pacific region. China held the first ASEAN-China Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management, served as the co-chair of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief and hosted its 19th meeting. China also successfully held the Webinar on Enhancing Early



Warning Technologies on Multi-Hazard and Disaster Chain for LMC Countries, and the Belt and Road Ministerial Forum for International Cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management. The Webinar on Emergency Medical Rescue for Authorities of Members States of SCO in Emergency Prevention and Response was held in September 2021, which started cooperation in the field of emergency medical rescue under the SCO framework. China chaired the 14th Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum and the 17th Meeting of Emergency Preparedness Working Group, actively promoted the establishment of the China-Pacific Island Countries Disaster Management Cooperation Mechanism, participated in the activities of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Disaster Preparedness Working Group, and carried out bilateral exchanges and cooperation in disaster relief with countries including Russia, Singapore, Mongolia, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Kyrgyzstan.

b. Maritime security cooperation

In 2021, China took an active part in maritime security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. China held the 12th and 13th rounds of high-level consultations on maritime affairs with Japan via video link, and agreed to continue joint maritime search and rescue exercises under the framework of the China-Japan Agreement on Maritime Search and Rescue, and to cooperate in combating maritime crimes and exchanges of law enforcement personnel. China and the ROK launched a dialogue and cooperation mechanism on maritime affairs chaired by their foreign ministries, and maintained communication and exchanges between their militaries, coast guards and search and rescue departments. China continued to explore ways to strengthen maritime security cooperation with ASEAN countries within the framework of implementing the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. The China Coast Guard and the Vietnam Coast Guard Command held their 5th high-level meeting in virtual modality.

China attaches great importance to keeping the sea lanes safe. It continued to take an active part in regional cooperation mechanisms including the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), and participated in the 15th Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Center (ISC) held via video link, making important contribution to maintaining sea-lane security and conducting maritime search and rescue.

China is committed to providing maritime security public goods for the region. The South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center constructed by China provides all-weather earthquake and tsunami monitoring and early warning services for countries around the South China Sea. The Marine Environment Forecast and Support System along the Maritime Silk Road continued its operation, with its forecast services covering the South China Sea and the northern Indian Ocean. To provide marine data and information services and promote capacity building in this regard, China has led the development of the Marine Database information exchange and networking project in the South China Sea which provides countries around the South China Sea information services related to marine environment cognition, maritime security and integrated marine management. China has also taken an active part in the activities of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF), and promoted exchanges and cooperation in this field through the IMRF's Asia-Pacific Regional Center.

c. Counter-terrorism cooperation

At present, counter-terrorism and security situation in the Asia-Pacific is complex and challenging. Some regions are facing active terrorist activities. Terrorist organizations are stepping up the use of cyber means to incite, recruit and plan for terrorist attacks. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted economic and social stability of regional countries and exacerbated the medium and long-term risks of terrorism.

China is actively engaged in international and regional counter-terrorism cooperation. It has strengthened international counter-terrorism cooperation within the SCO framework, organized joint counter-terrorism exercises, cracked down on illegal trafficking of arms, ammunition and explosives, carried out cooperation to identify and sever channels of infiltration, and promoted international counter-terrorism intelligence exchange and sharing. It hosted the Second International Seminar on Counter-Terrorism and the Great Wall International Forum on Counter-Terrorism, and actively participated in the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum and the APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group. It has also carried out bilateral counter-terrorism exchanges with countries including Russia, the US, Canada, the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, the ROK and Indonesia. In 2021, China participated in multilateral video conferences such as that of the Interpol Pacific Operations Working Group and the BRICS Counter Terrorism Working Group, and strengthened exchanges and cooperation with counter-terrorism departments of Southeast Asian, South Asian and Northeast Asian countries as well as other ARF members including the US, Australia, New Zealand and Russia.

d. Cooperation in combating transnational crime

China attaches great importance to combating transnational crime. By fully harnessing bilateral law enforcement and judicial cooperation mechanisms as well as multilateral platforms such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, China has actively engaged in various types of cooperation with other countries to prevent and combat transnational crime, with a view to building a community with a shared future for mankind that enjoys universal security.

In 2021, China and law enforcement agencies of ASEAN countries carried out active and practical cooperation in areas such as fugitive economic crime offenders, counterfeiting and smuggling, crimes involving wildlife, counter-narcotics and crimes that undermine border management. China attended the 8th China-ASEAN and 11th ASEAN Plus Three ministerial meetings on transnational crime. In 2021, more than 300 fugitive economic crime offenders were returned to China from ASEAN countries, more than 18,000 criminal cases involving crimes that undermine border management were investigated and solved, more than 48,000 suspects were arrested and more than 47,000 people that illegally crossed border were tracked down. The 1st China-Thailand Joint Anti-drug Operation Along the Lancang-Mekong River and the 7th China-Vietnam Joint Anti-drug Operation on the Border were held. China hosted or participated in the Greater Mekong Subregion Anti-Narcotics Cooperation High Level Meeting and Liaison Officials' Meeting and the Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies for Asia and the Pacific. China also held bilateral meetings on drug control cooperation with Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and Laos.



e. Cooperation on cybersecurity

China has always been a builder, defender and contributor for global cybersecurity. China is committed to promoting global governance and formulation of international rules on cyberspace, and to building a community of shared future in cyberspace. To this end, China put forward the Global Initiative on Data Security and together with the League of Arab States issued the Cooperation Initiative on Data Security. China stands ready to discuss and develop rules for global digital governance with other parties on the basis of the Global Initiative on Data Security to jointly advance global governance on cyberspace. In 2021, China took a constructive part in the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) and Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on information security and contributed to the adoption of final reports by these two processes. China supported the adoption of UNGA Resolution 75/282 and launch of substantive negotiations by the UN Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes.

In 2021, China actively conducted dialogue and cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries to jointly safeguard peace and security in cyberspace. China hosted the World Internet Conference, deeply engaged in cooperation on the digital economy under the G20 and APEC, and actively promoted the cybersecurity processes within frameworks such as the ARF, BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China also held consultations with Russia and the EU on affairs related to cyberspace, deepened bilateral cooperation on cybersecurity with such countries as Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia, and expanded practical cooperation on digital technology and network infrastructure with countries across the world. China co-hosted with Russia and Vietnam the first ARF Workshop on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes, with a view to deepening consensus on cooperation and jointly responding to the challenge of cybercrime.

In 2021, China actively engaged in bilateral and multilateral cooperation on law enforcement with ASEAN countries. China attended the 4th ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials Roundtable on Cybercrime (SORC), and renewed the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Combating Cybercrime with the Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam.

f. Cooperation on non-proliferation and disarmament

China is committed to upholding the international arms control and disarmament regime, and has actively supported and participated in international efforts for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

China attaches great importance to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and is committed to upholding the validity, authority and universality of the treaty. China has taken an active part in the preparatory work for the 10th NPT Review Conference and submitted to the conference an updated national report on its implementation of the NPT and six working papers, in which China comprehensively elaborated its position on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. China participated in international discussions such as the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference, maintained close communication with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and President-designate



of the 10th NPT Review Conference Ambassador Gustavo Zlauvinen, and held frequent bilateral consultations with the key parties, with a view to helping the conference achieve practical outcomes.

China has worked actively to strengthen the cooperation mechanism among the five Nuclear-Weapon States (P5). From 2 to 3 December 2021, the P5 countries held their 10th formal meeting in Paris, issuing a joint communiqué and achieving a host of practical results. After the meeting, the P5 countries submitted to the 10th NPT Review Conference the P5 Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms compiled under the leadership of China and the P5 working paper on strategic risk reduction.

China has actively supported efforts to build a nuclear weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia. On 22 November 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping attended the Special Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of China-ASEAN Dialogue Relations and delivered an important speech, in which he emphasized that China supports ASEAN's efforts to build a nuclear weapon-free zone and is prepared to sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone as early as possible. China has continued to actively encourage the other four Nuclear-Weapon States to resume consultations with ASEAN countries on the outstanding issues in relation to signing the Protocol.

China is seriously concerned about and firmly opposed to nuclear submarine cooperation between the US, the UK and Australia under the AUKUS framework. China urges the three countries to abandon their outdated Cold War mentality and narrow-minded geopolitical perceptions, faithfully fulfill their international obligations to nuclear non-proliferation, respect in real earnest efforts by regional countries to build a nuclear weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia, avoid undermining the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, and make more efforts that are conducive to regional peace and stability.

China has consistently advocated complete prohibition and destruction of all weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical weapons, and supported continuous strengthening of the validity, authority and universality of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. China values and actively engages in international exchanges and cooperation under these two conventions, with a view to sharing implementation experience and assisting other parties in enhancing their capacity for implementation.

China has strictly fulfilled its international obligations to non-proliferation, firmly upheld multilateralism, and supported the UN in leading international non-proliferation efforts. China is deeply engaged in the implementation of and comprehensive review under UN Security Council Resolution 1540. China supports international and regional cooperation on non-proliferation export controls and has earnestly fulfilled relevant international obligations. In December 2020, the Export Control Law of the People's Republic of China formally entered into force, and competent Chinese authorities are actively pushing forward the revision and update of relevant regulations and control lists under the framework of this law. China will continue to improve its relevant legal framework and control regime, and continuously modernize its non-proliferation export control system.



g. Outer space cooperation

China stands for peaceful uses of outer space and opposes weaponization of and arms race in outer space. China has actively called on the international community to jointly safeguard lasting peace and security in outer space and promote the peaceful uses of outer space, in order to better facilitate the economic development and social progress of all countries and realize the vision for a community of shared future.

Like China, ASEAN countries also stand for peaceful uses of outer space and oppose weaponization of and arms race in outer space. The two sides have maintained sound cooperation on outer space security and co-organized ARF workshops on outer space security several times. China is ready to further strengthen coordination and cooperation with ASEAN and other parties in the Asia-Pacific, so as to make positive contributions to jointly promoting security and sustainable development in outer space.

h. Cooperation on combating illicit small arms and light weapons

China exercises strict domestic control over small arms and light weapons (SALW) in accordance with law. China has introduced and implemented the Law on Firearms Control, revised the Regulations Governing Export Control of Military Goods, and continuously improved its inter-agency cooperation mechanisms. China has enforced whole-process control over SALW and put in place a Firearms Control Information System. The Export Control Law of the People's Republic of China, which took effect in December 2020, covers export control over military goods.

China attaches great importance to humanitarian issues caused by conventional arms and supports the international community in taking necessary measures to regulate international arms trade and combat illicit transfer of SALW and other conventional arms. On 6 July 2020, China officially joined the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which entered into force for China on 4 October of the same year. In August 2021, China attended the 7th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty as a state party for the first time, and submitted its first Initial Report to the ATT Secretariat by 4 October 2021. China takes seriously ASEAN countries' concerns over illicit transfer of SALW, actively supports relevant efforts within the region, and has taken part multiple times in ARF cooperation on illicit transfer of SALW and other conventional arms. China stands ready to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with all parties on this matter within the ASEAN framework.

i. Assistance in mine clearance

China has carried out demining assistance on a continuous basis. Since 1999, China has provided assistance in mine clearance for ASEAN countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar on many occasions, providing training for nearly 400 demining personnel and about RMB 87 million worth of financial and material assistance. In 2021, China provided Cambodia and Laos with RMB 8.1 million worth of mine detection and clearance equipment and humanitarian supplies, donated US\$200,000 to the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC), and co-organized a technical expert group meeting on mine clearance with ARMAC.



III. China's Views on the Future Direction of the ASEAN Regional Forum

The Global Security Initiative proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping is highly compatible with the vision and principles of the ARF. China is ready to work with other ARF Member States to actively implement the Global Security Initiative, better safeguard regional peace and stability, and realize common development and prosperity.

1. Uphold multilateralism and improve the regional security architecture

The ARF has the largest membership and the most sophisticated institutions among the platforms for security dialogue and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific, which makes it an epitome of multilateralism. It is important for all parties to strengthen dialogue and consultation, firmly uphold the international system with the UN at its core, the international order underpinned by international law, an open and inclusive regional security architecture, and ASEAN centrality in regional cooperation, and reject attempts to draw ideological lines and build exclusive blocs.

2. Deepen practical cooperation and maintain the direction of the ARF

Non-traditional security challenges such as public health, climate change, food security, energy security and terrorism are posing a serious threat to security and sustainable development of the region. It is important for all parties to, in light of the shared concerns and actual needs of regional countries and under the guidance of the understandings reached at the Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the Hanoi Plan of Action (2021-2025), advance practical cooperation in key areas in a balanced manner and strengthen capacity building of Member States, especially the developing ones, so as to better cope with risks and challenges and create a favorable environment for regional development.

3. Properly handle hotspot issues to safeguard regional peace and stability

It is important to pursue common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, strengthen strategic communication, and enhance mutual trust in security fields. It is also critical to follow the important principles of consensus, gradual progress, and non-interference in internal affairs, properly address the legitimate concerns of all relevant parties, and strive to resolve disputes and manage differences while seeking common ground to the greatest possible extent, so as to remove the root causes of crisis. All parties, especially major countries, must uphold justice, encourage dialogue, and play a positive and constructive role for realizing lasting peace and security in the region.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Over the course of the past year, the security landscape of both Europe and Asia has faced stark changes. The return of war in Europe, with Russia's unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, as well as the deteriorating security situation in Myanmar after the February 2021 military coup, and the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan in August 2021, present challenges to regional and global peace and security.

Conflicts, military build-ups and aggressions, and sources of instability, including hybrid threat, are increasing in our neighbourhood and beyond, leading to severe humanitarian suffering and displacement.

In addition to Russia's war against Ukraine, other evolving threats such as climate change, political instability, as well as supply chain disruptions have severe consequences for livelihoods, and energy and food security. These developments highlight the importance of a rules-based global order, the adherence to international law and the need to further foster multilateral dialogue in and with the region. The EU remains committed to ASEAN centrality and it will continue to engage with the ASEAN-led regional architecture to promote an effective rules-based multilateral order.

EU engagement in Asia is comprehensive and reached a critical milestone with ASEAN in 2020 when we raised our level of partnership to that of a Strategic Partnership. In 2022, the EU and ASEAN are celebrating 45 years of dialogue partnership. In this context, an EU-ASEAN Commemorative Summit is scheduled to be held in December 2022. As well as with ASEAN, the EU continues to engage closely with other Asian partners and seeks to build further on existing and future partnerships by establishing tailor-made security cooperation solutions.

This engagement is highlighted in the EU's Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, which promotes a free and open Indo-Pacific, with ASEAN at its center. Under this Strategy, the EU will deepen its engagement with partners in the Indo-Pacific to respond to emerging dynamics that are affecting regional stability. The EU's approach is designed to foster a rules-based international order, a level playing field, as well as an open and fair environment for trade and investment, tackling climate change and supporting connectivity with the EU.

Furthermore, the EU's "Strategic Compass", adopted in March 2022, will guide the development of the EU security and defence agenda for the next ten years. The Strategic Compass will support the EU to act rapidly and robustly, enhance our ability to anticipate threats and protect citizens, invest more and better in capabilities and innovative technologies, fill strategic gaps and reduce technological and industrial dependencies, and to strengthen our cooperation with partners to address common threats and challenges.

Existing and future security dialogues will be complemented by concrete activities, such as training, targeted capacity building, confidence building, technical assistance, peer-to-peer cooperation, table-top exercises, practitioner exchanges and development of networks.

While progress in vaccination has helped contain the COVID-19 pandemic, its effects are still felt in several countries. To alleviate the impacts, the EU has been leading the multilateral response to the pandemic, offering its support as donor to the COVAX facility and enabling for the quick distribution of life-saving vaccines to the region.

In addition, 'Team Europe' (the EU together with its Member States and financial institutions) committed EUR 800 million to support ASEAN and its Member States in face of the pandemic and to ensure a sustainable and inclusive socio-economic recovery and improve resilience of health systems.

The pandemic has further exposed the interdependence of the European and Asian continents while also highlighting that both gain resilience from open, diversified and undistorted access to world markets.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

1. Overview of National Security and Defence Policy

The escalation of violence at the EU's borders gives a renewed impetus to the EU's security policies. Globalisation, free movement and the digital transformation continue to bring prosperity, make our lives easier, and spur innovation and growth but also carry risks. We have seen the effects of the health crisis on our interconnected international system. We witnessed that high levels of interdependence may be manipulated by terrorism, organised crime and nation states, malicious cyber activities, disinformation campaigns, direct interference in elections and political processes as well as economic coercion, are direct threats to our citizens and our European way of life. Security threats are also becoming more complex, increasingly intertwined with energy policy, climate policy, social policy and migration policy. More than ever, security threats do not limit themselves to national borders, but also reach beyond the border between the physical and digital world.

The EU's approach to external security is based on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). In March 2022, the EU adopted the Strategic Compass to set out a common strategic vision for EU security and defence policy over the next five-ten years. The objective of the Strategic Compass is to make the EU a stronger and more capable security provider, so to be able to better protect its citizens and to contribute to international peace and security. Additionally, it will enhance the EU's strategic autonomy and its ability to work with partners to safeguard its values and interests. To do so, the Strategic Compass provides a shared assessment of the strategic environment in which the EU is operating and of the threats and challenges the Union faces. The document makes concrete and actionable proposals, with a very precise timetable for implementation, in order to improve the EU's ability to act decisively in crises and to defend its security and its citizens. It covers all the aspects of the security and defence policy and is structured around four pillars: act, invest, partner and secure.

The EU has a vital geopolitical and economic interest in the stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region. Europe and the Indo-Pacific are highly interconnected. What happens in the Indo-Pacific has important implications for Europe. Through its Indo-Pacific Strategy, adopted



in September 2021, the EU aims to contribute to the stability, security, and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region, while promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights and international law. The EU's strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific is designed to contribute to the region's stability, security, prosperity and sustainable development, in line with the principles of democracy, rule of law, human rights and international law. The seven priority areas for EU action are the following:

- i. sustainable and inclusive prosperity;
- ii. green transition;
- iii. ocean governance;
- iv. digital governance and partnerships;
- v. connectivity;
- vi. security and defence;
- vii. human security.

The EU's strategic engagement with the Indo-Pacific region is designed to promote effective rules-based multilateralism, an open and fair environment for trade and investment, while supporting connectivity with the EU. The EU's commitment to the Indo-Pacific region is inclusive of all partners wishing to cooperate with the EU and the EU will deepen its engagement with like-minded partners that already have Indo-Pacific approaches of their own.

In addition, the Global Gateway is the new European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport sectors and to strengthen health, education and research systems across the world. Global Gateway stands for sustainable and trusted connections that work for people and the planet. It will help to tackle the most pressing global challenges, from fighting climate change, to improving health systems, and boosting competitiveness and security of global supply chains.

To deal with the threats to the EU energy security, in March 2022, the European Commission proposed an outline of a plan to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels well before 2030, starting with gas, in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The REPowerEU plan would specifically serve to increase the resilience of the EU-wide energy system.

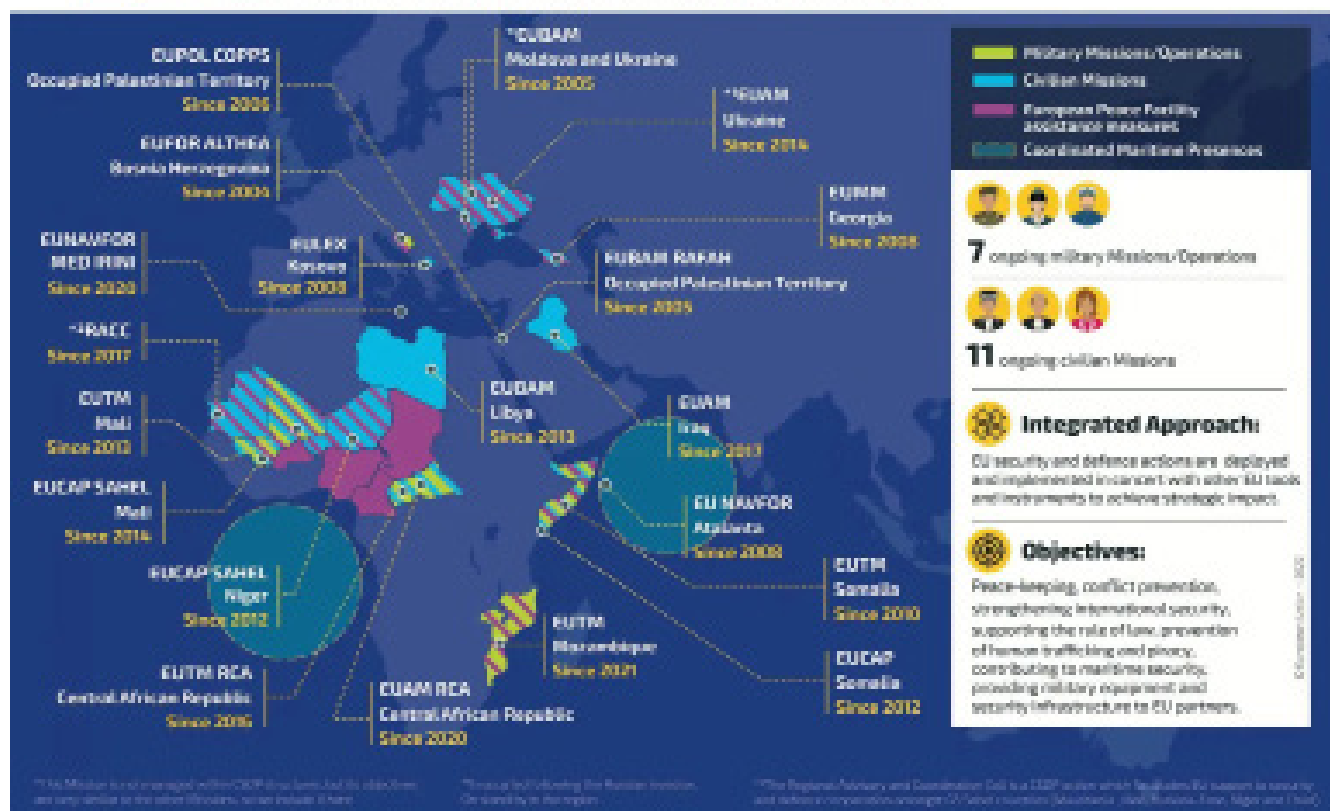
In an era of strategic competition and complex security threats, the European Peace Facility (EPF) expands the EU's ability to provide security for its citizens and its partners. With a total budget of EUR 5 billion for the period 2021-2027, it enables the EU to provide all types of military equipment to the armed forces of EU partners, in compliance with the highest human rights standards, while also funding the common costs of military CSDP missions and operations.

In 2021, the EU continued to carry out civilian and defence missions throughout its near periphery and in Africa. These missions have allowed the EU to contribute to peacekeeping efforts, conflict prevention and to strengthen international security. They are an integral part of the EU's integrated approach to tackling security concerns in both civilian and military contexts. As of October 2021, the EU conducted 7 military missions and operations, and 11 civilian missions.





EU SECURITY AND DEFENCE ENGAGEMENT AROUND THE WORLD



After the end of the first initial phase of the initiative in 2020 and the Strategic Review, the year 2021 marked the second initial phase of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). The EU currently supports 60 projects under PESCO, focusing on different operational domains, such as Cyber, Land, Maritime, Air, Space, and Training.

Further progress has been made on the European Defence fund, which has a dedicated allocation of close to EUR 8 billion in the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework to finance collaborative defence research and collaborative capability development projects complementing national contributions.

Threats to global security require continuous cooperation with multilateral partners. Through 'Framework Participation Agreements' (FPAs), the EU aims to promote the participation of partners around the world in EU CSDP missions and operations. FPAs have been established with ARF members such as Australia Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the United States and Vietnam.

Internationally, in 2021, the EU continued to play a leading role on the international scene and press for resolution on intractable security issues. Of particular note, the EU was engaged in:

- Preservation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) (as an integral part of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture),
- Support of the COVAX mechanism,
- Support of the stabilisation in the Sahel, Libya and Afghanistan, where the local developments constitute a long-term and direct threat for European security.



The EU remains convinced that only a political solution, grounded on the full implementation of UNSC Resolution (UNSCR) 2254 and the Geneva Communiqué, will enable lasting stability and peace in Syria. In order to continue its efforts, the EU and UN, on 10th May 2022 co-chaired the sixth Brussels Conference on “Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region”, which succeeded in mobilising aid to Syrians inside the country and in neighbouring countries through pledges totalling close to EUR 6.4 billion for 2022 and beyond. The European Union and its Member States remain the largest provider of international aid and deliver humanitarian, stabilisation and resilience assistance inside Syria and in neighbouring countries.

In Libya, the EU has continued to support the UN-led Berlin process that aims at restoring peace and stability across Libya. As part of the strategy on Libya and broader security within the Mediterranean, the extended mandate of EUNAVFOR MED IRINI until 31 March 2023, will allow to further enforce the UN arms embargo by inspecting vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya suspected to be carrying arms or related material in accordance with UNSCR 2292. EUNAVFOR MED IRINI will also monitor illicit exports of petroleum from Libya, contribute to capacity building and training to the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy and tackle the disruption of human smuggling and trafficking networks.

The EU continues to develop strong partnerships in Central and South-East Asia, and remains committed to peace and stability in Afghanistan and to support its people. Following the Taliban takeover, the EU and its Member States undertook a collective effort to evacuate thousands of EU citizens and third country nationals, including Afghans who worked for diplomatic missions and other Afghans at risk. In October 2021, the EU announced an overall EUR 1 billion package which includes also EUR 227 million humanitarian funding for life-saving and life-sustaining emergency humanitarian assistance in the following sectors: food and nutrition, shelter, water and hygiene-related activities, medical care, education and protection, with a focus on the specific needs of women and girls. The EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan engaged in dialogue with the Taliban-appointed interim government around five benchmarks defined in the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of September. Said benchmarks are centred on the secure departure of all those wishing to leave the country, the respect of human rights, the implementation of humanitarian operations in the country, the prevention of Afghanistan to become a base for terrorist cells and the establishment of an inclusive and representative government through negotiations.

2. National Contributions to Regional Security

The EU has continued to pursue an ambitious international security agenda that reflects our broad cooperation with our international partners. The fight against terrorism, pursuit of disarmament, maritime security and disaster management are key areas of EU engagement. The work is directly relevant to the most pressing issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

a. Counter-Terrorism

The fight against terrorism has picked up further pace during 2022. The EU's key objectives at the global level are to deepen international consensus and enhance international efforts in preventing and combatting terrorism and violent extremism, based on fundamental values and principles. The EU continues to strengthen the strategic and policy continuum between



its internal and external security in order to enhance the effectiveness of its counter-terrorism actions across the board.

With ASEAN, the EU continues to actively engage on Counter-Terrorism through capacity building efforts and political dialogues and holds regular bilateral security dialogues and consultations with ASEAN and its Member States on these issues. Following the 21st ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) with the EU in July 2021, the ASEAN-EU Work Plan to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime was updated for the years 2022-2024.

In the context of the ARF, the EU continues its work as co-chair, together with New Zealand and Malaysia of the ASEAN Regional Forum work stream on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational crime until 2023. The recent edition of the ARF ISM on CTTC took place virtually in May 2022.

In this context, the EU has proposed a workshop under the auspices of the ARF in order to build on work accomplished since the adoption of the International Convention for the suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999) as well as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) and other important platforms.

In this area, the European Commission presented an ambitious package of legislative proposals in 2021, to strengthen the EU's anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) rules, including a proposal for the creation of a new EU authority to fight money laundering. The aim is to improve the detection of suspicious transactions and activities, and close loopholes used by criminals to launder illicit proceeds or finance terrorist activities through the financial system.

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

Addressing non-proliferation and disarmament continue to be an integral EU foreign policy priority in 2021 and 2022. The EU continues to reaffirm its commitment to preserve the South-East Asian region free of nuclear weapons, and all other weapons of mass destruction (Bangkok Treaty), and to promote relevant international instruments.

The EU believes that a multilateral approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international peace and security. The EU continues to support universal accession to, and the full and effective implementation of, all relevant international Treaties and instruments. The EU remains a strong supporter of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Chemical Weapon Convention (CWC), the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention (BTWC), the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (the Ottawa Convention) and the Convention on certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The EU is actively supporting the universalisation and implementation of these Treaties and Conventions by means of dedicated outreach projects.

The EU welcomed the ratification of the CTBT by Tuvalu and Gambia in 2022. The EU promotes consistently the benefits and the contribution of the Treaty to peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation, including in its civil applications. The EU looks forward to continuing its cooperation with Malaysia at the Tenth NPT Review Conference in August 2022, as the chair



of the Main Committee I on Nuclear Disarmament. The NPT Review Conference is also appropriately focusing attention (of both the non-proliferation and the broader security community) on the importance of nuclear security, as an end itself and as an enabler of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The EU is a natural partner in the responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in line with the highest-safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. The EU has substantial experience in nuclear safety and is willing to share this expertise within the ARF framework. The EU promotes the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) and to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and its Amendment (A/CPPNM) as fundamental elements of the global nuclear security and anti-terrorism architecture.

As part of its cooperation with ASEAN, the EU supports the CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence, National CBRN Action Plans (NAPs) and the initiative's network of national focal points. The NAPs have proven to be useful coordination instruments at the country level and efficient tools to channel donor support in this field. Further coordination on CBRN related issues with other key regional actors (i.e. the US, Canada, Australia, Japan) is essential.

The EU has also supported ASEANTOM through the EU-ASEAN Regional Project on Enhancing Emergency Preparedness and Response in ASEAN and the ASEAN Early Warning Radiation Monitoring Network. These technical projects form part of a broader effort to exchange technical expertise to ensure the security of dangerous materials and ensure the consistent application of protective measures in the Southeast Asian region.

The EU will maintain its policies aiming at strengthening the global disarmament architecture and multilateral non-proliferation regimes. This includes continued diplomatic efforts towards the goal of achieving a 'Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East'. Moreover, the EU is a global top assistance donor in addressing the threats posed by mines and explosive remnants of war. The threat from illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) will continue to be addressed through international cooperation and supported by the EU through projects in third countries. The EU will also support international efforts to enhance outer space security.

c. Transnational Crime

The EU Strategy on Drugs (2021-2025) sets out the political framework and priorities for the EU's drug policy. The strategy aims to ensure a high level of health promotion, social stability and security and contribute to awareness raising. Under drug supply reduction/enhanced security the strategy targets all aspects of the illicit drug market, and includes the prevention of, dissuasion from and disruption of drug related crime, in particular organised crime, through judicial and law enforcement cooperation, intelligence, interdiction, confiscation of criminal assets, investigations and border management.

The Strategy makes it a strategic priority to strengthen international cooperation: enhancing the role of the EU as a global broker for a people-centred and human rights-oriented drug policy through cooperation with third countries, regions and international organisations,



while strengthening the commitment to development-orientated drug policies and alternative development measures.

Furthermore, the new EU strategy on combating trafficking in human beings (2021-2025) focuses on preventing the crime, bringing traffickers to justice and protecting and empowering victims.

In addition, the EU is committed to tackling illegal wildlife trade as part of the EU's biodiversity strategy.

d. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Cooperation by ASEAN Member States on disaster management makes a positive contribution to the strategic aims of ASEAN, to sustainable development and to the broader regional integration process. The EU stands ready to provide humanitarian assistance to ASEAN Member states when disasters strike and national or additional support is required. To strengthen regional capacities, the EU supports the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) through the EU-SAHA Programme from 2019 to 2023.

The EU aims to embed humanitarian response into existing local systems and to develop their ability to scale-up to accommodate new needs. Humanitarian principles and the needs of affected populations must be at the core of EU-ASEAN cooperation on disaster preparedness and emergency response strategies. Risk-informed investment, the inclusion of community knowledge and local solutions in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) planning, public-private partnerships, and identifying innovative solutions are also essential.

In May 2022, the European Commission announced a new allocation of EUR 48.4 million in humanitarian aid to address the most pressing needs of people in Bangladesh, Myanmar and the region facing displacement, the consequences of protracted conflict and the ongoing Rohingya refugee crisis.

Additional specific support has been provided to the Philippines, which frequently faces natural disasters. Overall, the EU has been a staunch partner to the Philippines and has provided over EUR 153 million since 1996. Most recently, in 2022, the European Commission announced the allocation of EUR 21 million for disaster preparedness and humanitarian aid in the Philippines, Nepal and other Southeast Asian countries. The funding will support people affected by natural hazards, COVID-19 and conflict. The European Union has also brought the Philippines into the Copernicus Programme, which will augment the country's environment data and monitoring initiatives and disaster response capabilities.

The EU systematically mainstreams disaster preparedness into its humanitarian assistance, as appropriate in each context. The EU's Disaster Preparedness Strategy contributes to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and to the priorities established by the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and its work programmes for 2021-2025.

EU support in Southeast Asia aims to improve regional systems and capacities, ensure these are responsive and inclusive to community priorities, and fills gaps when local systems are overwhelmed. The EU has been working on Disaster Preparedness (DP)/DRR in ASEAN countries since 1995, under the banner of its Disaster Preparedness Programme 'DIPECHO'. DIPECHO



targets vulnerable people living in the main disaster-prone regions of the world. Its objective is to reduce the impact of natural disasters by strengthening local physical and human resources in high-risk areas. The first DIPECHO action plan launched in 1998. Since then, the EU has invested almost EUR 81 million DP/DRR in this region.

e. Maritime Security

The EU is strongly committed to a rules-based international maritime order and to the principles of international law as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The EU is committed to maritime security cooperation, freedom of navigation and overflight, and the peaceful and sustainable use of the seas in the interest of all states. Against this backdrop, and with the ambition to improve the international governance of our oceans, the EU is also among the leaders in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing with the aim to make sure that no illegally caught fisheries products end up on the EU market.

The EU is an active promoter of maritime security and safety, in Asia and globally. The EU maritime security policy has increasingly gained momentum since June 2017, when the European Council adopted its 'Council Conclusions on Global Maritime Security', as well as through the revision of the EU's Maritime Security Strategy Action Plan in June 2018, which increased the focus on civilian-military cooperation, information sharing and addressing global challenges to EU sea basins and all oceans through regional responses.

In the context of the ARF, the EU co-chaired the ISM on Maritime Security until August 2021 and is continuing its engagement in the ARF through the organisation of workshops on pertinent issues. For instance, together with Vietnam and Australia, the EU is organising a series of workshops on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments to address Emerging Maritime Issues. With the same two partners in also co-organized in April 2022 a 4th ARF Workshop on Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation.

In the context of the Indo-Pacific Strategy, the EU seeks to increase the EU Member States' naval presence in the Indo-Pacific, while also conducting more joint exercises and port calls with partners in the region, including multilateral exercises, to fight piracy and contribute to the protection of freedom of navigation in the region.

They will continue to promote regional maritime security through the project CRIMARIO II (Critical Maritime Routes Indo-Pacific) from the Indian Ocean to Southeast Asia and the Southern Pacific. The project is centred on capacity building activities with a view to contribute to safer seas lanes of communication with the EU, via increased maritime domain awareness, information sharing (through the IORIS platform), regional and inter-agency cooperation.

Piracy attacks have significantly decreased over recent years, although challenges remain. The EU has contributed to increasing maritime security and safety, particularly through its CSDP mission Operation ATALANTA. This mission – in combination with the wider international response, implementation of best practices, and the provision of private armed guards on-board ships – has reduced the number of attacks at sea in the Western-Indian Ocean region. Operation ATALANTA has stepped up its naval cooperation including through exercises with India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Oman and others.



III. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum

The EU's contribution to the ARF is a tangible demonstration of its willingness to support ASEAN-led security architecture in Southeast Asia. It is also evidence of the EU's commitment to regional peace and stability, and to the development of a more robust, rules-based regional security order.

The ARF continues to be the most comprehensive multilateral security forum in the ASEAN region and beyond. The ARF offers a valuable platform for partners to engage on a broad range of issues. Building on the ARF's comprehensive approach to security issues, the EU has engaged actively with ARF partners at various levels and on a range of critical issues.

In line with ARF Ministerial Guidance, the EU is keen to make the ARF more "action oriented". The EU acknowledges the importance of strengthening the organisational and institutional structures of the ARF, including the ARF Unit in the ASEAN Secretariat. The EU respects and promotes the central role of ASEAN in the emerging regional architecture and believes in the need to ensure transparency and synergy between ARF and other regional fora, such as the ADDM+ and the East Asia Summit.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

India's security is linked to the wider Indo-Pacific region, which is a seamless maritime space from the western coast of North America to the eastern shores of Africa. Whether it was the forces of nature – the monsoon winds for instance – or our maritime and trading history, there has been a strong connect from the Horn of Africa and the western Indian Ocean on the one hand and the Straits of Malacca on the other. The Indo-Pacific Ocean system carries an estimated 65 percent of world trade and contributes 60 per cent of global GDP. The evolving traditional and non-traditional security challenges across the entire region are therefore key for India.

The COVID pandemic has undoubtedly been a major shock for the international community that has fundamentally changed the way we imagine societies, governance and international order. Two years since the onset of the pandemic, the understanding of the pandemic has evolved, vaccines have been developed and distributed, however the situation has not been fully abated. Subsequent mutant variants and pandemic waves reflect that post-vaccine world may still not be a post-pandemic world.

The concepts of “vasudhaiva kutumbakam” – ‘the whole world is one family’ and “sarve bhavantu sukhinah” – ‘all be at peace’ are at the core of our values and traditions. The principles underlining these concepts, inclusivity, equality and openness guide India's Indo-Pacific vision. At the East Asia Summit (EAS) held in Bangkok in 2019, PM Narendra Modi announced the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) as practical implementation of India's vision of Indo-Pacific. As an open, non-treaty based global initiative, the IPOI draws on the existing regional cooperation architecture and mechanisms to focus on central pillars conceived around Maritime Security; Maritime Ecology; Maritime Resources; Capacity Building and Resource Sharing; Disaster Risk Reduction and Management; Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation; and Trade Connectivity and Maritime Transport. These seven pillars are being progressed in cooperation with respective partners for each of these areas.

India's engagement with the South East Asian region and Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is based on its 'Act-East' Policy (AEP). Key elements of India's Act East Policy are to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationships with countries in Indo-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. India shares a deep connect with ASEAN and views it as a central factor for the security architecture in the region. India continues to attach importance to ASEAN centrality and unity in ensuring peace and stability in the region.

On October 28, 2021, Prime Minister of India co-chaired the 18th India-ASEAN Summit with Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei which was held virtually and saw participation from the Leaders of ASEAN Member States. The leaders announced the Year 2022 as India-ASEAN Friendship Year to commemorate 30 years of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations. In October 2021, our Prime Minister and ASEAN leaders adopted the ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific for Peace Stability and Prosperity in the Region - to build upon the synergies between the ASEAN Outlook for the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).

A Plan of Action (2021-2025) to further strengthen the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership in the next five years, was adopted in 2020. As part of its implementation, planned activities seek to enhance India-ASEAN connectivity, support ASEAN community building objectives and expand cooperation in maritime domain. India has reiterated its support to ASEAN's Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC)-2025, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV and agriculture development strategy.

India's cooperation with East Asia Summit (EAS) has continued to grow. As a nation deeply committed to strengthening the EAS as an apex level ASEAN-led mechanism, India continues to contribute positively to the EAS goals. Government of India in partnership with Australia organized the 5th EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation in November 2021 to take forward our commitments in the maritime security domain. Government of India in partnership with Australia and Singapore also organized the EAS workshop on Combating Marine Pollution especially Marine Plastic Debris from 14-15 February 2022.

India is actively engaged with various Indo-Pacific frameworks including, inter alia, Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), East Asia Summit (EAS), Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC). India also joined the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) as a Development Partner in July 2019 and has become an Observer at Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) in March 2020. India is also a part of various other multilateral institutions, which deal with maritime security issues in the region including ADMM Plus, Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ship in Asia (ReCAAP) and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF). India also joined the Djibouti Code of Conduct- Jeddah Agreement (DCOC-JA) as an observer and the G7 and Friends of Gulf of Guinea (FOGG) as a member in 2020.

The Sea Lanes of Communications passing through the South China Sea are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region. It is natural for the international community to have vital stakes in ensuring freedom of navigation and over flight, and unimpeded commerce in these international waterways. This commitment was also reflected in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. We hope that all parties to that Declaration would strictly abide by it, in letter and spirit, and will not take any actions that would jeopardize peace and security in this region. India hopes that the Code of Conduct negotiations between ASEAN member states and China will lead to an outcome that is in keeping with all relevant international laws, including UNCLOS. We also hope that it will not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of all nations according to international law.

II. National Contributions to Regional Security

1. Counter-terrorism and transnational crime

India believes that amid the continuing scourge of terrorism and growing networking amongst terrorists' collective cooperation among countries is critical to fully disrupt terrorism, identify the perpetrators and hold them accountable. Strong measures should be undertaken against those who encourage, support and finance terrorism and provide sanctuary to terrorists. The growing lethality of these twin problems is a global cause of concern and it requires a stronger international resolve to address terrorism effectively.



India condemns terrorism in all its forms and expressions and firmly believes that no cause whatsoever or grievance can justify terrorism. India has suffered the scourge of terrorism sponsored from across our borders for a long time. The Government of India is resolute in its fight against terrorism and to ensure that the perpetrators of terrorist acts, their masterminds and conspirators are brought to justice.

India is fully supportive of United Nations efforts in combating terrorism. It has sponsored and supported several resolutions on Counter Terrorism. India has constantly pursued the adoption of draft Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) at the UN with an objective of providing a comprehensive legal structure to combat terrorism.

The access to and misuse of technology by terrorist organizations is a major concern for all of us. Cyberspace, encrypted chat applications and social media platforms are being used extensively for radicalization, misinformation, propaganda, terror funding, training, recruitment and execution of terrorist attacks. The threat of 'lone wolf' radicalized over the cyberspace has increased manifold in the recent times. Another threat vector is the use of drones to carry out terrorist attacks. Rapid emergence of encrypted chat applications, access to Dark Web and crypto-financing and emergence of newer technologies will continue to have significant implications for counter terrorism efforts.

India regularly participates and supports global efforts in countering terrorism at international organisations such as UN Security Council, Interpol, UNODC, FATF etc. India implements UN Security Council Resolutions 2178, 1373 and 1624 on terrorism. Besides agency-to-agency liaison, India has entered into structured co-operation and dialogue mechanisms like Joint Working Group on CT (JWG-CT), Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, Extradition Treaty etc. India, being the Chair of the UN Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) for 2022, envisages focus on certain areas such as Countering Financing of Terrorism, victims of terrorism, role of women in Counter Terrorism, support from the civil society etc. during its term.

2. Non-Proliferation, Counter-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

India remains committed to universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament. India strongly believes that nuclear disarmament can be achieved in a time bound manner through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework. India's Working Paper, presented to the Conference on Disarmament in 2007, encapsulates this approach. India's annual resolutions in the UNGA on the "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" and on 'Reducing Nuclear Danger' are approved with large support across countries.

India espouses the policy of "No First Use" of nuclear weapons and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states. India supports the commencement of negotiations on a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention at the Conference on Disarmament. India remains committed to the commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in the CD on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. India participates in the meetings on the initiative of 'Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament' (CEND). India also participates in the 25-member Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Nuclear Disarmament Verification (NDV) established by the UN Secretary General. As a responsible nuclear weapon State, India

has undertaken various nuclear risk reduction measures. India has also participated actively in the ARF ISMs on Non Proliferation and Disarmament and related workshops and seminars.

India values the role played by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in facilitating expansion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy while bolstering nuclear security and safety at the national level. India actively participated in the Conference of the Parties of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material held at IAEA from 28 March to 1 April 2022.

India attaches very high importance to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and supports efforts to strengthen the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to enable it to fulfil its mandate within the framework of the Convention. India continues to accord enormous value to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) and its universalization. In light of the upcoming Ninth Review Conference of the Convention in 2022, India reiterates its call for institutional strengthening of the Convention, including negotiation of a comprehensive and legally binding Protocol, providing for an effective, universal and non- discriminatory verification mechanism to strengthen the implementation of the Convention by States Parties.

India is mindful of the rapid pace of developments in science and technology which, while offering tremendous benefits, also pose potential challenges to international peace and security. India's annual Resolution at the UNGA on the "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" which is adopted by consensus, highlights their consideration by the international community.

India has an unwavering commitment towards global efforts for preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. India submitted its latest National Report on the implementation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 1540, highlighting the measures and activities undertaken in the area of export controls and other aspects. After joining the UNSC as a member in January 2021, India has participated in deliberations affecting international security affairs. India has also engaged with relevant committees of the UN on specific matters relating to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. India has a strong system of law based export controls of sensitive material, equipment and technology. India is a member of Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group. It also subscribes to the Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation.

India believes that it is imperative to strengthen our collective commitment to disarmament instruments including the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which is a unique instrument within the UN framework for progressive controls over certain categories of conventional weapons.

India is fully committed to the CCW and the humanitarian principles enshrined in the Convention and is a party to all the five protocols of the CCW. The Convention while stipulating measures to mitigate humanitarian concerns arising from the use of specific weapons, strives to strike a balance with the military necessity of such weapons. India has also been participating actively in the deliberations of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) within the framework of the CCW and recognizes the progress



made in the discussions at the GGE on LAWS in recent years and reiterates its support to the eleven guiding principles adopted. We are deeply concerned about the challenges posed by illicit transfers of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons (SALW), to terrorists and non-State actors, which pose a major threat to international peace and security. India accords high importance to the UN Programme of Action as the cornerstone of multilateral efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit trade in SALW. The full and effective implementation of the UN Progress-- of Action and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) is a priority for India, especially as a means for combating terrorism and transnational crime. India has submitted its national reports on UN PoA, UN Register on Conventional Arms, military expenditure and on CCW due in the year 2022, in a timely manner, and encourages all States to do so, towards promoting transparency and confidence building.

3. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and Search & Rescue (SAR)

India's HADR and SAR efforts have contributed to addressing the non-traditional challenges in the Indo-Pacific region. Building on its 2004 tsunami relief experience, India has since undertaken a wide range of HADR Operations ranging from major Non-combatant Evacuation Operations to disaster response post earthquakes, cyclone and floods, providing equipment, food, medical supplies and vaccines. India's unique geographical position in the region, complemented by its capabilities for disaster response has enabled it to contribute significantly towards providing HADR.

In 2021-22, India continued its relief work to support countries in the region in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under 'Mission SAGAR', India provided medical supplies, ambulances and food aid to our partners including: August 2021- Liquid Medical Oxygen and concentrators to Sri Lanka and Indonesia; September 2021 – Liquid Medical Oxygen and concentrators to Vietnam and Thailand, and mobile oxygen plants to Bangladesh; December 2021 - food aid to Mozambique and Comoros; and, April 2022 – medicines and ambulances to Sri Lanka, Maldives and Seychelles. In addition, Indian naval ships were also involved in medical casualty evacuation from a Singapore flagged crude carrier MV Eagle Tampa off Mumbai; from a Bahamas flagged bulk carrier MV Lyric Poet off Kochi; and, from Seychelles Coast Guard Ship Zoroaster from the high seas.

In ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus), Indonesia and India are the current co-Chairs for Experts' Working Group (EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). Focussed on building interoperability in HADR among ADMM Plus countries, this EWG empowers ASEAN and regional bodies for supporting HADR and evolving related methods and procedures. The 17th and 18th EWGs on HADR were held from 24-25 November 2021 and 11-12 May 2022 respectively in a virtual format and took stock of the current state of ASEAN Militaries Ready Group (AMRG) on HADR, Multi-National Coordination Centre (MNCC) and their related standard operating procedures (SOPs) as well as plans for undertaking a field training exercise (FTX) on HADR in 2023 in Indonesia.

India is the co-Chair of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Working Group on HADR and towards building capabilities and interoperability in HADR. In this context, the first edition of the IONS Maritime Exercise 2022 (IMEX -22) was held from 26 to 30 March 2022 at Goa which saw participation from 16 member countries of IONS.



The Indian Coast Guard has been nominated as the Chair of Working Group on Search and Rescue (SAR) for the term 2022-25, under the Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM). Established in 2004, HACGAM is a forum of 23 countries, with the objectives of collaboration in maritime search and rescue, marine pollution response and maritime law enforcement.

Towards enhancing preparedness and response capability of the stakeholders in combating marine spills, India has been conducting National Level Pollution Exercise (NATPOLREX) and the 8th edition of this exercise was held off Goa from 18 – 20 April 2022. The exercise witnessed participation of 30 Observers from 23 countries including members from South Asia Cooperative Environment programme (SACEP) and International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd (ITOPF) as well as ships from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. A marine pollution workshop conducted by India from 21-22 April 2022 saw participation of observers from Maldives, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Seychelles. India conducted Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Course (IMO Level I & II) from 24-29 April 2022, which drew 42 participants from 16 countries of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

4. Maritime Security

Maritime security is an important dimension of India's international engagement in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. During India's Presidency of the UN Security Council in August 2021, maritime security was the theme for high level discussion, chaired by the Prime Minister of India. This meeting concluded with a UN Security Council's Presidential Statement on maritime security, which suggests a broader approach to address common concerns of maritime safety and security.

India supports free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region and believes that the UN Convention on the LAW of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets out the legal framework for activities in the oceans and seas. Maritime Security is also one of the seven pillars of India's Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) on which India has taken a lead to work with all the interested partners in the region to ensure peace and prosperity. Participation in IONS has now increased to 25, with Oman joining this initiative recently making it one of the largest in the region.

India engaged bilaterally with countries around the world as well as regional bodies ranging from EAS, ARF, ADMM Plus, IORA, IONS, Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Djibouti Code of Conduct-Jeddah Amendment (DCoC-JA), Contact Group on Illegal Maritime Activities–Western Indian Ocean (CGIMA-WIO), G7 plus Friends of Gulf of Guinea (G7++FoGG), Head of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meetings (HACGAM), and the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) etc. In the ARF Inter-Sessional Year 2021-22, India along with Australia and Indonesia, co-chaired a workshop on "Law of the Sea and Fisheries" from 07-08 December 2021; and along with Indonesia and US, co-Chaired the Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Maritime Security on 12 May 2022, both in a virtual format.

Since 2008, India has been maintaining continuously at least one ship in the Gulf of Aden by rotation, with a total of over 90 turnarounds of ships till date, to address non-traditional maritime security challenges such as piracy, illicit trafficking, smuggling etc. Under Operation Sankalp,



Indian Navy has also been deploying its ships to ensure freedom of navigation and secure movement of trade in the Gulf of Oman since 2019.

India's Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) near New Delhi, launched in December 2018, has contributed greatly towards enhancing maritime domain awareness through collaboration with partner countries and organizations. With white shipping information exchange agreements with over 20 countries and regional organisations, as well as international liaison officers from over ten countries, the IFC-IOR in addition to alerting all the partners on maritime incidents also publishes monthly, half yearly and yearly reports on its website.

India has been actively involved in capacity building, capability enhancement and training of the maritime entities of various countries in the region; providing Lines of Credit, patrol aircraft and helicopters, patrol vessels and boats for patrolling of their vast EEZs, training of personnel, deploying training teams for enhancing maritime security capacities, and providing hydrographic assistance to countries in the region.

India conducted the 3rd edition of Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC) from 07-09 November 2021 at the Naval War College, Goa, which saw participation of the Chiefs of Navies or their representatives, from 12 Indian Ocean littorals. It envisions collective commitment of countries towards ensuring safety, security and inclusive growth in the Indian Ocean Region through developing common maritime priorities which is aligned with India's maritime vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the region). The 5th East Asia Summit (EAS) Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation steered by India and Australia was held at Kolkata, India from 23–24 November 2021 in a hybrid format. The conference focused on maritime security; resource and information sharing; and pandemic and disaster risk reduction and management.

Indian Navy's largest multi-lateral exercise MILAN 2022, which saw participation from about 40 countries was held from 25 February – 04 March 2022 at Visakhapatnam and saw discussions in harbour and exercises at sea towards enhancing maritime security through a collective endeavour.

5. Cyber Issues

India is committed to an open, secure, free, accessible and stable cyberspace environment, which will become an engine for innovation, economic growth and sustainable development. India is actively participating in the UN Open Ended Working Group on the Security of and in the Use of ICTs 2021-2025 (OEWG 2021-2025).

India appreciates ARF initiative and efforts towards preventing and combating cybercrime. India has been an active participant in the ARF cyber consultations and cooperation. It took part in the 9th ARF OESG and 4th ARF ISM on ICTs Security held on 10th May 2022 and 13th May 2022. India also participated in ARF Workshop on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes, held on 15th-16th March 2022.

On 20 October 2021, the Ministry of External Affairs of India in cooperation with Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi, hosted the third annual ASEAN-India Dialogue on Cyber Issues. The main themes of the dialogue were: encryption standards, creation of a secure



5G ecosystem, and strengthen norms relating to critical infrastructure. The shared vision of India-ASEAN is highlighted in the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2021-2025), which was approved by the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and India. This is a step in the direction of sustainable, inclusive, and trusted digital transformation, and the commitment to future-proofing institutions, work forces, and ICT infrastructure. ORF published the report with three actionable recommendations: to build a regional malware repository and create an ASEAN-India Cyber-security Threat Exchange portal, to establish a dialogue on a regional encryption standard, and to establish Annual ASEAN-India joint cyber drills.

Data is increasingly becoming an important source of economic growth, and cooperation should be enhanced for trusted sources, respecting privacy and ensuring data protection. Growing cyber threats have the potential to disrupt national, regional and international security environment. Securing critical information infrastructure and tackling growing incidents of cyber crime and cyber terrorism are paramount. Cooperation on countering terrorism and extremism propaganda on the internet, in removing such content, in alerting each other of such activities and in investigating terrorist attacks mounted through the use of ICTs could be an essential part of confidence building measures among countries.

Ransomware attacks have become sophisticated and pervasive over the last decade. They now have the potential of disrupting critical cyber infrastructure and government organizations. For instance, ransomware incidents are growing at an unprecedented rates year-to-year across the world and have trickled from organization-level attacks to individual-level targeted attacks. To counter cybercrimes and serve justice to victims of cybercrime, international cooperation is a foundational need. The ongoing Ad Hoc Committee to elaborate a comprehensive international convention against use of ICTs for criminal purposes is an important process under the aegis of the United Nations and India has been actively participating in it.

6. Outer Space

Space activities increasingly contribute to national socio-economic development, promote scientific research, technological progress and support national self-defence endeavours. India believes that outer space should remain an ever-expanding frontier of cooperative endeavour, rather than conflict. It is incumbent on all space faring nations and others to contribute to safeguarding outer space as the province of all humankind, and preserve and promote the benefits flowing from space technology and its applications for all. India is an active participant in the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) to promote long-term sustainability of outer space.

As a major space-faring nation, India has made significant strides in developing a range of space technologies that also benefit other countries, especially fellow developing countries. India has sizeable space assets which provide the critical backbone for the country's economic and social infrastructure. India is party to all the major international treaties relating to outer space. India's focus is on the use of space for 'welfare' and not for 'warfare'. We remain opposed to the weaponization of outer space and preventing arms race in outer space and support deliberations and negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a legally binding instrument in the field of outer space.

III. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum

India views ARF as an inclusive forum supporting dialogue and cooperation towards stability and security in the region. ASEAN is the driving force of the ARF, and ASEAN's unity and solidarity will further the objectives of ARF. India believes that the ASEAN way of "dialogue and consensus" have served the grouping well and should remain ARF's guiding principles. ARF provides a valuable platform in which practical cooperation can be forged amongst the member States in addressing various common challenges.

India believes that ARF should continue to evolve into a balanced, open and inclusive framework for partners to interact and cooperate in addressing traditional and non-traditional security challenges. Candid discussions on regional and international security issues in ARF have led to greater interaction and understanding of different perspectives and activities conducted under its framework, and have contributed to confidence building, among the ARF countries and beyond. India will continue to engage constructively in and contribute positively to the ARF processes.

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has an important role to uphold the ASEAN Charter, the Charter of the United Nations, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the Bali Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations, and international law, which and thereby enhances regional peace, security, stability, and prosperity which promotes mutual confidence and trust.

Indonesia's perspective of the regional security outlook is consistent with its strategic geographical location, its nature as the largest archipelago in the world, and its vision to be the Global Maritime Fulcrum. Maritime security in the region is, therefore of top priority. Southeast Asian waters and the surrounding area are vital to the region's economy, trade, transportation, and communication.

Indonesia attaches great importance to peace and stability in the South China Sea. Disputes generated from overlapping claims in the South China Sea underscores the necessity for peaceful resolution in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). It is therefore crucial that all parties refrain from activities that may escalate tensions, and fully and effectively implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC).

Indonesia supports the negotiation of the Draft Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea since early 2019. A COC that is substantive, effective, and actionable will be essential to govern the behavior of states in the region. Indonesia will continue to show leadership to promote substantive progress, including offering avenues for various controversial issues in the negotiations.

Indonesia reaffirms that the freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, and other lawful uses of the seas are one of the fundamental rights of all States protected by international law. Indonesia will consistently uphold 1982 UNCLOS as the legal basis for determining sovereign rights and legitimate interests over maritime areas.

A few regional issues raise recently that may also generate a threat for regional security. Indonesia closely observes the development of cross-strait relations between China and Taiwan. Indonesia believes that parties involved should refrain from taking any action that might escalate the tension in the region. Intensifying a dialogue would generate better solution in addressing the differences between parties involved.

The continuing arms race and military power projection is worrisome. Indonesia observes carefully the establishment of AUKUS partnership. Indonesia stresses the importance of Party's commitment to continue meeting all of its nuclear non-proliferation obligations. As Parties to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), Indonesia urges parties of AUKUS to respect the principles of peaceful coexistence and friendly cooperation stipulated in the Treaty.



Indonesia views the issue of non-proliferation and disarmament require a new approach to address. Indonesia stresses the importance of a constructive dialogue as the main component of a peace process, which will ultimately be pivotal to the achievement of regional and international peace and security. In the near future, involvement of an independent and competent body (IAEA) in the verification process will certainly help to achieve the goal of a permanent denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Indonesia reiterates that UNSC sanctions are not the end, but the means and needs to be well targeted and reviewed periodically to be effective. Indonesia reiterates its commitment to implement the multilateral sanctions in accordance with its national laws and regulations. Indonesia does not recognize the unilateral sanctions.

Based on UNGA Resolution A/RES/3284-B, the definition of Weapons of Mass Destruction consists of atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons, and many weapons developed in the future which might have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above. Indonesia believes that Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) threatens the existence of every nation in the world, humanity, as well as peace, security and stability of the world at large.

Indonesia has joined several multilateral related treaties including the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and is currently in the process of ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Indonesia has also joined the Bangkok Treaty (Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty/SEANWFZ) as Southeast Asia Region commits to delegitimize all forms of WMDs.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

1. Overview of national security and defence policy

Today's global security and strategic environment influences national defence. National policy should be dynamic and adaptive particularly to address the increasingly complex and multidimensional challenges, considering that there are military and non-military threats, as well as hybrid threats, which can be categorized as factual and non-factual. These threats include terrorism, radicalism, separatism and armed rebellions, natural disasters, border violations, sea piracy and natural resources theft, epidemics, cyber attacks and espionage, trafficking and drug abuse as well conventional war and armed conflicts. Internal country conditions cannot be separated from the influence of the strategic environment triggered by ideology, political, economical, socio-cultural, and security factors. These developments become challenges in managing national defence.

Indonesia adheres to an independent and active foreign policy. Indonesia believes that neighbouring countries are friends with a shared commitment to promoting security and stability in the region. Establishing a common perspective is needed to minimize problems faced in international relations, including in the bilateral and multilateral fora.



Indonesia relies on a total defence system in order to achieve national goals. The system essentially involves all citizens and all other national resources, each with a role and function. The involvement of every citizen is based on love for the homeland that is oriented towards a common goal to serve national interests. Maritime defence is based on the concept of Indonesia serving as the Global Maritime Fulcrum. This concept of national defence guides every citizen in recognizing national goals, national interests, the nature of national defence, national defence system, national defence functions and national defence basic principles.

Indonesia has been actively promoting peace and enhancing cooperation in the Asia Pacific and the Indian Ocean through the ADMM and ADMM-Plus frameworks. One of Indonesia's initiatives, namely the Discussion Paper on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo Pacific (AOIP) from a Defence Perspective was adopted by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on the occasion of the 15th ADMM, on 15 June 2021.

In 2021, Indonesia also actively participated in the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups via video conference in all seven areas of cooperation. Indonesia is leading the promotion of cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) by co-chairing the ADMM-Plus Experts Working Group (EWG) on HADR with India from 2021 through 2024. Indonesia hosted the 16th ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR on 28-29 April 2021 via video conference to start off the co-chairmanship programs. The meeting aims to discuss the work plan for the fourth cycle of the ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR. During Indonesia's chairmanship of ADMM and ADMM-Plus in 2023, it will organize Table-Top-Exercise and Field Training Exercise on HADR in Yogyakarta. The exercise is focused on enhancing the ADMM-Plus countries' capacity for humanitarian assistance during a pandemic.

Indonesia continues its contribution to the regional effort to counter terrorism by initiating the ASEAN Our Eyes (AOE) framework. In 2021, Indonesia hosted the 5th AOE WG via video conference to discuss, among others the implementation of AOE Standard Operating Procedure, the technicality of the Our Eyes Command Centre (OECC), the update of the ASEAN Direct Communication Infrastructure (ADI) facility, and the regional and global terrorism situation.

As the country coordinator of ASEAN-Russia cooperation in 2021, Indonesia successfully hosted the ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise (ARNEX) off the coast of Indonesia's Sumatera island in December 2021. The three-day exercise aims to promote interoperability between the ASEAN member states and the Russian navy in maritime security. The participating countries undertook several activities including maritime interdiction, search and rescue (SAR) exercises and practicing the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) – a communication protocol to avoid incidents at sea.

Alongside Russia, Indonesia also strengthened its engagement with other Plus countries through ASEAN + 1 Defence Ministers' Informal Meetings with Australia, United States, China, Japan, ROK, New Zealand, and India.

Indonesia attaches great importance of multilateralism. It is reflected by Indonesia's active participation in the international organizations such as in the United Nations. Indonesia served its role as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from January 2019 to December



2020. But Indonesia's participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations dated back since 1957, when the country dispatched its first deployment of military contingent to UN Emergency Force (UNEF) in Egypt. Since then, Indonesia has been a proud contributor by sending more of its military and police servicemen as peacekeepers.

The country's involvement in UN Peacekeeping Operations has always reflected the mandate emanating from the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, to actively participate and contribute in the maintenance of world order based on freedom, lasting peace, and social justice. Indonesia's commitment to UN Peacekeeping Operations has also transformed the latter into one of the country's flagships of diplomacy in the United Security Council membership.

As of January of 2022, Indonesia's contribution to UN peacekeeping operations amounted to 2,697 peacekeepers. This number places Indonesia in the rank 8 out of 122 Troop/Police Contributing Countries (TPCCs). They are deployed in 7 missions out of 23 UN missions, namely UNIFIL (Lebanon), MONUSCO (Democratic Republic of the Congo), MINUSCA (Central African Republic), MINUSMA (Mali), UNMISS (South Sudan), MINURSO (Western Sahara), and UNISFA (Abyei-Sudan).

Indonesian peacekeeping contingent has been supported with moderate numbers of women personnel to help better implementation of the protection of civilian mandate in the field. As of January 2022, 158 female personnel are in the missions and serve as troops, military staff, Formed Police Unit, Individual Police Officers, and some as doctors and nurses.

Their presence has been a critical enabler to generate strong social interactions with the locals by exercising community engagement activities under the Civil-Military Coordination/ CIMIC, notably protection to women, girls, and children. Indonesian women personnel are able to further help the contingent in winning the hearts and minds of the local community as an important component to support successful implementation of mandated tasks, as well as useful to provide safety and security to the peacekeepers themselves.

Those postures of contribution thus far have placed Indonesia as one of the main enablers to keep the UN well-resourced and well-oiled to run the machinery of peace operations.

Moving forward, Indonesia is keen to strengthen its contribution and support initiatives that bolster UN Peacekeeping substantively for its ultimate aim that is to assist a nationally-owned and -led endeavour by the host country to build sustaining peace and development. Among others is by enhancing the capacity of the Indonesian Peacekeeping Center in Sentul, as an international hub for regional training, and marshalling the role of the country's civilian capacities, including women's participation, into peacekeeping missions to help effective implementation of the contemporary multi-dimensional peacekeeping mandates.

Indonesia encourages the importance of the contribution of civilian experts in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding missions in order to face the dynamics of situations in conflict areas that are increasingly becoming more multidimensional and require approaches from various aspects. In this regard, Indonesia has played an active role in supporting the development of civilian capacity (CivCap), both at the multilateral, regional and national levels.

Indonesia has given intellectual contributions to the UN Peacekeeping namely:

- One of the first countries formulating the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P).
- Initiated a Presidential Statement (PRST) at the UN Security Council on increasing peacekeeping capacity to improve the safety and security of personnel (2019).
- Advancing its interests regarding reimbursement, transportation, and equipment in negotiations for the preparation of the Contingent Owned Equipment Manual 2020, Initiating the UN Security Council Resolution 2538 (2020) on Women in Peacekeeping.
- One of the members of the Group of Friends on the COVID-19 Vaccine for Uniformed Personnel to ensure a COVID-19 vaccine for all peacekeepers in the UN Mission.
- Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends on Safety and Security of UN Peacekeepers launched in April 2021.
- The main negotiator of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on the issue of the safety and security of the UN MPP troops at the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34).
- One of the Co-Chairs of the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial (UNPM), and Preparatory Meeting UNPM on 2021 with Japan and Ethiopia on training and capacity building of UN PKO personnel.
- Pledging on the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial of 1.000 peacekeepers in reserve and capacity building cooperations.
- One of the co-sponsors of UN Security Council Resolution 2518 (2020) and 2589 (2021) on Safety and Security of Peacekeepers.
- The host of UN Triangular Partnership Programme, a joint peacekeepers training program with UN and Japan scheduled in mid-2022.

IV. Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

i. Total defence expenditure on annual basis

1) Defence expenditure

Based on Book II of Work Plans and Budgets of State Ministries/Institutions (RKA-K/L) issued by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, the budget of the Ministry of Defence in 2022 is Rp. 133,923.4 billion or Rp. 133.9 trillion.

2) Defence expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Based on Indonesian Economic Development throughout 2021 issued by The Central Bureau of Statistics, Indonesia GDP is Rp. 16,970.8 trillion, resulting in the percentage of the defence budget GDP is around 8%.

3) Defence expenditure per capita

Based on Indonesia's population data submitted by the Director of General of Population and Civil Registry, Ministry of Home Affairs, by the end of 2021 there were 273,879,750 registered civilians, hence making the defence expenditure per capita to a total of Rp. 488,986.

ii. Total number of active personnel in national armed forces.

The National Armed Force aggregate to 442,496 personnel consisting of 335,685 army personnel, 68,757 naval personnel, and 38,054 air force personnel.



1. National Contributions to Regional Security

I. NATIONAL LEVEL

ii. Counter-terrorism

a. The adoption of the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism 2020-2024

Indonesia has adopted Presidential Regulation Number 7 of 2021 on the National Action Plan (NAP) to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism 2020 – 2024. The NAP consists of three pillars, namely:

1. prevention, including national preparedness,
2. counter-radicalization, and deradicalization;
3. law enforcement, protection of witnesses and victims; strengthening national legislative framework;
4. international partnership and cooperation.

The NAP consists of 130 Action Lines, mostly related to prevention efforts. The overall aim of the NAP is to secure the protection of citizens from violent extremism that leads to terrorism, by addressing the drivers of violent extremism, namely

1. conditions conducive and structural context
2. radicalization process, the so- called “push and pull factors”. The NAP takes on the whole of government and society approach. The NAP will be implemented by around 48 relevant ministries and agencies, with the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs).

On 16 June 2021, the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism 2020-2024 was officially launched by the Vice- President of the Republic of Indonesia. The NAP also includes measures to prevent and combat terrorist financing. The NAP compliments the National Strategy to Prevent and Combat Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing. The measures are aimed at preventing and disrupting terrorist activities, such as through the postponement of transactions and freezing of assets without delay.

b. Initiatives of Soft Approach

Apart from the NAP, Indonesia is also engaged in implementing national flagship programs in preventing terrorism, among others:

- Establishing the Peace Media Center (PMD) and BNPT TV, as means strengthening national counter-narrative campaigns;
- Establishing Youth Peace Ambassadors, at the national and regional level, by engaging Youth’s resilience against terrorist propaganda, including violent extremism;
- Establishing Religious Leaders Task Force – disseminating peaceful messages of religious moderation;
- Establishing the Coordination Forum for Terrorism Prevention (FKPT) in 32 provinces – by involving various local leaders, religious leaders, academicians, and local governments;
- Establishing Synergy (Sinergisitas) between 46 ministries and agencies, focusing on prevention works, in 5 targeted provinces, namely West Java, Central Java, East Java, Central Sulawesi, and West Nusa Tenggara;
- Establishing the Deradicalization Centre, located in Sentul, Bogor, for terrorist inmates



- to undergo deradicalization program under voluntary nature, as means for creating a “center of excellence”;
- Launching of the Indonesian Knowledge Hub on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (I-Khub), a web-based application to improve coordination, collaboration, and cooperation in the field of Countering Terrorism/Violent Extremism in Indonesia, among the government, civil society, and development partners. The I-KHub is being supported by the governments of Australia and the US, and by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

II. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Through the AMMTC/SOMTC mechanism, as mandated by the Manila Declaration, Indonesia as the “voluntary lead shepherd on counter terrorism has initiated two documents focused on addressing the issue of radicalization and violent extremism, through a cross-sectoral and cross-pillar approach within the ASEAN context.

The ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (ASEAN PoA PCRVE 2018-2025) was adopted at the 12th AMMTC Meeting on 31st October 2018. The main objective of the ASEAN PoA PCRVE 2018-2025 is to prevent and counter radicalization and violent extremism that leads to terrorism in the Region. This document is expected to be a reference for ASEAN Member States when they begin to establish their respective national/ domestic Action Plans in preventing and countering radicalization and violent extremism.

ASEAN PoA PCRVE 2018-2025 consists of 4 (four) pillars, namely

1. Prevention of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism;
2. Counter Radicalization and Promotion of Deradicalization;
3. Law Enforcement and Strengthening National Legislation Related to Countering Radicalization and Violent Extremism; and
4. Partnership and Regional Cooperation.

In order to implement the ASEAN PoA PCRVE 2018-2025, SOMTC-Indonesia has held a series of ASEAN Cross- Sectoral and Cross-Pillars Meeting in 2019 to develop ***the Work Plan of the ASEAN PoA PCRVE or the Bali Work Plan 2019 – 2025.***

The Bali Work Plan 2019-2025 was successfully adopted at the 13th AMMTC Meeting, on 27 November 2019. This document serves as a testament to ASEAN's commitment to synergize cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration in preventing and eradicating transnational crimes, with the highest number of implementation participation from various sectoral bodies to date. There are 19 ASEAN Sectoral Bodies involved in implementing the Bali PCRVE Work Plan.

In an effort to encourage the implementation of the Bali Work Plan, in November 2021, BNPT in collaboration with the United States Government has succeeded in becoming the Co-Host of the ASEAN Workshop Series on Aviation Security in the Time of Covid-19 Pandemic Program. This program has been implemented in 2 series of virtual workshops which were implemented as a form of implementation of the Bali Work Plan, especially in Priority Area 3.8. The two series of workshops are:

1. The First ASEAN Workshop on Aviation Security: Watchlisting, 9-10 November 2021.
2. The Second ASEAN Workshop on Aviation Security: Insider Threat and Cargo Security, 17-18 November 2021.



b. The Role of Indonesia in ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

On a broader scope, through the ASEAN Regional Forum consisting of 27 participating states, including the EU, Indonesia has initiated two documents focusing on addressing the issue of violent extremism, namely:

1. The ARF Statement on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism, adopted on the 26th ARF Ministerial Meeting held on 2 August 2019, in Bangkok, Thailand. This Statement is the first of its kind for ARF leaders in addressing the threat of terrorism and violent extremism at the ARF; and
2. The ARF Statement on the Treatment of Children Recruited by or Associated with Terrorist Groups, adopted on the 27th ARF Ministerial Meeting held on 12 September 2020 in Hanoi, Vietnam. The statement can be used as a reference for other derivative ASEAN documents related to the treatment of children associated with terrorist groups.

c. International Context

Coinciding with the implementation of UN CT Week 2021 in June 2021, Indonesia was one of the speakers at the 2nd Conference of the Heads of the Counter Terrorism Agency of UN Member States to convey about Indonesia's efforts in overcoming terrorism both at the national and global levels. This invitation was a form of UN acknowledgment for the progress that has become an important achievement for Indonesia in the field of counter-terrorism over the past few years, both at the national, regional and global levels. In particular, Indonesia's participation in this forum strengthens the Government's commitment to take counter-terrorism seriously, not only based on priorities and needs in the national context, but also synergizing with efforts to fulfill Indonesia's compliance with various international instruments and norms.

Since 2020 the Indonesian government has also begun to encourage initiatives to establish international minimum norms and standards regarding the handling of children related to terrorism, and in 2021 they will consistently continue to commit to advance this initiative in the UN CCPCJ forum.

In terms of technical cooperation, Indonesia has strengthened cooperation with various UN agencies including UNODC, UNDP, UNOCT, CTED, UN Women, both at the national and regional levels, through various programs preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) through four the scope of cooperation includes:

- i. Community-based approaches to PVE;
- ii. Countering Financing of Terrorism;
- iii. Rehabilitation and reintegration for VE prisoners and offenders;
- iv. safeguarding juveniles from terrorism.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on terrorism activities has shifted to varying degrees in different regions, including in Indonesia and the wider Southeast Asian region. The situations have resulted in the emergence of new threats and forms of terrorism and violent extremism all over the world, such as:

- i. terrorists' use of cyberspace and new technologies for recruitment, propaganda, and funding;
- ii. increasing racial, ethnic, religious, and political motivations for far-right extremism;
- iii. the growing number of female perpetrators and family members. For Indonesia, the measures to address terrorism should be multidimensional, comprehensive, and balanced between hard and soft approaches.

Indonesia also attaches great importance to international cooperation in addressing the root causes of terrorism and eliminating the conducive environment that triggers violent extremism. Furthermore, the consensus adoption of the 7th review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy last year has demonstrated the strong appetite among the Member States for coordinated international efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism.

Consistent with national and regional efforts, Indonesia has played an active role in various international forums aimed to promote collaboration in countering terrorism – one of which is Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF). Since 2017, Indonesia and Australia served as co-chairs of the GCTF Working Group on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) which focuses its work on addressing the challenges of radicalization and recruitment of individuals to violent extremism and terrorism.

As part of its leadership, Indonesia continues to work with GCTF Members and Partners to share practical, action-oriented steps for CVE, including identifying challenges, good practices and lessons learned – mainly in six priority areas which consist of:

- Gender and CVE;
- National-Local Cooperation in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism;
- Countering Online Violent Extremism;
- Rehabilitating and Reintegrating Returnees and Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters;
- CVE in Prisons;
- Racially and Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism.

d. Measures against Terrorist Financing

Based on Law no. 5/2018, the Indonesia National Counter Terrorisms Agency (BNPT) functions, among other things, to formulate, determine and coordinate national policies, strategies and programs in the field of counter-terrorism. Then, based on Law no. 9/2013 concerning the Prevention and Eradication of TF, BNPT is one of the relevant government agencies that can provide information related to updating the List of Suspected Terrorists and Terrorist Organizations . In relation to efforts to support TF risk mitigation, BNPT has taken the following steps:

1. Initiating the formation of Presidential Decree No. 7/2021 on the National Action Plan for Combating Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism;
2. Established 32 Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forums (FKPT) in 32 Provinces;
3. Optimizing foreign policy through
 - strengthening the implementation of international law within the national legal framework related to countering terrorism and terrorism financing,
 - coordinating the protection of Indonesian citizens abroad from criminal acts of terrorism,
 - increasing international cooperation in overcoming acts of terrorism. terrorism crimes at the bilateral, regional and international levels;
4. Monitor, recommend inclusion and/or update information on/related to individuals/entities suspected of being involved in terrorism and/or terrorism financing;
5. Organizing the implementation of increased coordination with related Ministries/Agencies in the handling of the list of Suspected Terrorists and Terrorist Organizations;
6. Handling Foreign Terrorist Fighters through the Task Force (Satgas) under the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs.



The following is the result of mapping the risk of the Financing of Terrorism based on the Indonesian Risk Assessment (National Risk Assessment / NRA) document on the Crime of Financing Terrorism and Funding for the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction issued by the Government of Indonesia through the Center for Reporting and Analysis Financial Transactions:

1. Risk Assessment Results Based on Terrorism Funds Collection Mode.

Some of the main findings show that personal sponsors (terrorist financiers/fundraisers), irregularities in collecting donations through social organizations (ormas), and legitimate business ventures are the most common modes of collecting TPPT funds by terrorists.

2. Risk Assessment Based on the Terrorism Fund Transfer Mode.

The mode of transfer of funds with a high risk of financing terrorism is through financial service providers. In the survey conducted, it was found that banking products from commercial banks are still frequently used by terrorist groups in raising and transferring funds. The existence of suspicious transactions carried out indicates that the character of the terrorist group in using banking facilities is usually to avoid tracking by using the name of a third party (wife, child, or other family member) who is not related to the group network in this case is not included in the List of Suspected Terrorists and Terrorist Organizations.

In addition to using banking products, law enforcement officials also found the use of foreign exchange services for financing terrorism. The crime of Financing Terrorism through Non-Bank Foreign Exchange Business Activities is rife. In addition, the transfer of funds is also carried out through Non-Bank Fund Transfer Operators. Finally, it is also possible to transfer terrorism funds through the carrying of money across national borders.

3. Risk Assessment Based on the Use of Terrorism Funds Mode.

Not only in terms of purchasing weapons, terror funds that have a high risk are also used to finance the mobility of terrorist members in traveling within the country or foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) and training. Fundraising is also carried out by terrorist groups to provide salaries for members like a business organization and also to family members of terrorists who have died in carrying out the process of detention by the state. The provision of salaries and compensation is aimed at obtaining support and sympathy for the struggle of terrorist groups. In addition to purchasing and providing compensation, terrorist groups also finance the use of social media to recruit new members according to their goals and as a propaganda tool in spreading their ideology.

In the context of TPPT, emerging threats are defined as new threats that are considered to have the potential to occur in the future, or threats that have actually been recognized but whose impact has not yet been seen widely. Regarding TPPT, the following are some of the emerging threats in question:

1. Terror Financing Crimes Performed by Corporations (Companies); Illegal Drugs;
2. Virtual Assets; as well as
3. Online Loans/Peer to peer lending.



III. Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament National Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540

Indonesia has taken necessary measures to comply with Security Council Resolution 1540, including cooperation with neighbouring countries. Indonesia has always been constructively participating in multilateral negotiations to strengthen non-proliferation and to achieve disarmament of Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) in all its aspects.

Indonesia also calls for the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all equipment, information, material and facilities and resources or devices related to WMD and of the provision of assistance in the nuclear, biological and chemical scientific and technological fields to non-State actors.

This spirit is reflected in Indonesia's national policy and basic principles. Indonesia is fully compliant to the maintenance of regional peace and security. In 1971, together with other members of ASEAN, it declared South East Asia as the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality.

In regard to the latest national development on the fields related to the implementation of UN Resolution 1540, Indonesia has ratified relevant international treaties, which among others include Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1979, Chemical Weapons Convention in 1998, Biological Weapons Convention in 1992, the Treaty on South East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in 1997, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 2012, and International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in 2014. It is currently in the process of ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Indonesia has also adopted the codes of conduct and Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement of IAEA.

Indonesia has also enacted various relevant laws among others on export control (Law No.10/1995), eradication of criminal acts of terrorism (Law No.15/2003 amended by Law No. 5/2018), and on the use of chemical substance for chemical weapons (Law No.9/2008). With the view to strengthen the effective national implementation of international obligations, Indonesia has established the Centre of Excellence on Nuclear Security and Emergency Preparedness in 2014 and the National Authority on Chemical Weapons in 2017.

The Government in 2016 proposed the amendment of the Law No. 10 Year 1997 on Nuclear Energy which will stipulate three main issues under the National Policy and Strategy of Nuclear Security as well as the penalty that has not been provided by current national law. The three main issues are as follows:

1. Developing an integrated information system to support nuclear security;
2. Increasing coordination related to nuclear security by synergizing the duties and functions of relevant Government authorities;
3. Strengthening the infrastructure of nuclear security.

The implementation of the three main issues is strengthening coordination on nuclear security by synergizing the duties and functions of relevant Government authorities.



Through Presidential Decree No. 19 Year 2017 on Indonesian National Authority on Chemical Weapons, Indonesia has a strong legal framework for its National Authority on Chemical Weapons, and proper modalities for enforcing all obligations of the chemical weapons convention.

With regard to enforcement actions, the Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency and relevant agencies conduct monitoring/control on the issuance of regulations and permits, carries out inspections, and implements procedure of the nuclear material inventory accounting system. The verification of inventory is managed by routine inspection, which involves the monitoring of the quantity, location and ownership; movement of materials from one installation to another; and export and import of nuclear materials. Routine inspection also includes monitoring waste management.

It is acknowledged that the risk of nuclear or other radioactive material in terrorist acts is regarded as a serious threat to national and international peace and security. Nuclear or other radioactive material out of regulatory control could lead to criminal or terrorist acts. Indonesia as an archipelagic country faces an enormous operational challenge in implementing nuclear security measures due to an exceptionally long shoreline and numerous entry points, such as seaports, airports and land crossings.

To address the challenge, national capability in implementing nuclear security and emergency response and preparedness needs to be improved. A national co-ordination effort to establish a capacity building center and technical and scientific support for nuclear security and emergency response is necessary. The Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency launched an initiative called I-CoNSEP (Indonesia Center of Excellence on Nuclear Security and Emergency Preparedness) in 2014. The initiative ultimately aims to improve the national capabilities in nuclear security and emergency preparedness, through a better coordination among stakeholders, training and exercise, technical support, and infrastructure development. I-CoNSEP is expected to fulfil the needs for human resource development and the provision of support services for nuclear security and emergency response implementation at national level. Furthermore, I-CoNSEP is expected to take a bigger role in contributing the development and sustenance of nuclear security and emergency preparedness in the South East Asian Region.

In terms of nuclear security, The I-CoNSEP reflects the concepts of centers of excellence currently those promoted by the IAEA and many other multilateral organizations. The IAEA Office of Nuclear Security (IAEA/ONS) espouses the concept of Nuclear Security Support Centre (NSSC). Similar concept is also being promoted by the European Union through the Instrument for Stability (IfS) via the establishment of Chemical-Biological-Radiological-Nuclear (CBRN) Centre of Excellence (CoE).

The widespread use of radioactive materials throughout Indonesia indicates that the traffic of radioactive materials is not something that happens in an uncommon basis. In addition, the strategic geographical location of Indonesia made it as one of the most important trade routes in the world, which is also to include the trade of radioactive materials. Therefore, illegal trade is a real threat for Indonesia. An illegal traffic of radioactive materials could not only threaten national security, but also the region as well as worldwide. Therefore, problems of radioactive

materials smuggling or illicit trafficking has become a global issue, hence it requires synergic cooperation not only at the national level, but also at regional and international level.

Acknowledging the existence of global nuclear security threat, Indonesia develops its ability to prevent, detect and to respond to any illicit trafficking or illegal activities involving radioactive materials. In 2017, the Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency in coordination with other relevant stakeholders such as the Directorate General for Customs and Excise (DJBC) of the Ministry of Finance, National Police (POLRI), Maritime Security Agency (BAKAMLA), Port Managements, Port Health Offices (KKPs) of the Ministry of Health, and National Agency for the Border Management (BNPP) have developed guideline for detection and response in the case of radioactive material illicit trafficking. The document describes roles and responsibilities of The Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency and other relevant stakeholders in the prevention of radioactive materials illicit trafficking.

Based on awareness of the serious threat to radioactive material illicit trafficking and the need for cooperation to achieve the goal of securing all radioactive materials, the President of Indonesia, through a letter from the Secretary Cabinet number B-201/Seskab/Polhukam/4/2016 gave order to the Minister of Home Affairs and the Minister of Transportation to take all necessary steps to install radiation portal monitors (RPM) at international ports and airports, as well as cross-border posts as a form of supervision and prevention of radioactive materials illicit trafficking. Currently there are five ports installed with RPM equipment, they are: Tanjung Priok – Jakarta, Tanjung Emas – Semarang, Tanjung Perak – Surabaya, Bitung – Manado, and Soekarno-Hatta – Makassar.

Particularly on biological issues, Indonesia has Law No.4/1984 on infectious disease of which it is currently being amended to address comprehensively relevant biological security issues. With regards to measures taken to address financing activities under the scope of Resolution 1540, Indonesia has issued two joint regulations on the establishment of national list to combat terrorist and proliferation financing of WMD. Indonesia is currently in the process of becoming a member of FATF.

Indonesia has been working closely with relevant competent international institutions such as OPCW, IAEA, and WHO to enhance national and regional capacity building programs on a regular basis. Indonesia will continue to enhance its cooperation on these important issues through bilateral, regional and multilateral forums, including through ARF.

Non-Proliferation/NPT Regime

Indonesia views NPT as an indispensable instrument in one part to ensure the inalienable rights to use of nuclear energy in strictly peaceful manner, while in other part to ensure no proliferation of nuclear technology for non-peaceful purposes. Indonesia also supports the notion that the objectives of the NPT can only be achieved through a balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory implementation of all its three pillars. The three main pillars are disarmament of nuclear weapons, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and peaceful uses of nuclear technology.



Disarmament

Indonesia urges the nuclear deterrence doctrines as Nuclear disarmament's objective cannot be achieved if every major possessor state continues to enhance its nuclear arsenals as a deterrence factor. Indonesia also stresses an obligation under Article VI of the NPT to pursue in good faith, and to bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under transparent, strict and effective international control.

Indonesia concerns on the continuity of qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons (upgrading, refurbishing or extending the service life of nuclear weapons and related facilities) and related aspects. The modernization measures could contribute to a new arms race and undermine the value of reductions in nuclear weapons.

Indonesia calls on all NWS to fully implement the 13 practical steps in the manner that was agreed to at the 2000 Review Conference and the action plans adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference on nuclear disarmament.

Indonesia is also among the first countries to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) Treaty, having signed it on the same day it was opened for signature, on 24 September 1996. Indonesia believes that the CTBT is a key element in the international regime for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

As an Annex II country, Indonesia has ratified the CTBT through Law No. 1 year 2012, a very timely initiative as it was taken soon after ASEAN Member States concluded negotiations with Nuclear Weapon States (NWSs) on the latter's accession to the Protocol of the SEANWFZ Treaty at the 19th ASEAN Summit in Bali in November 2011.

In terms of supporting the implementation of CTBT, the Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency in cooperation with the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency, has installed radiological monitoring station at the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency Stations with CTBT Stations. Their locations are:

- Lembang, Bandung, Jawa Barat station (AS040)
- Jayapura, Papua station (AS041)
- Sorong, Papua station (AS042)
- Kappang, South Sulawesi station (AS044)
- Baumata, East Nusa Tenggara station (AS045)

The installation of radiological monitoring station is to provide radiological data to complement the seismic data from CTBT station installed at the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency Stations above mentioned in case of nuclear weapon testing.

Indonesia also actively participated in the series of meetings of the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS), which was held in Washington DC in 2010, Seoul in 2012, The Hague in 2014 and Washington DC in 2016.



Since the inception of the NSS, Indonesia played constructive and have presented a “gift basket” which serves as a reference for countries striving to enhance safety and security in accordance with their respective national processes and legal systems.

Non-proliferation

Indonesia believes that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing and are essential for strengthening international peace and security. Non-proliferation derives its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament.

Pursuing non-proliferation alone while ignoring nuclear disarmament obligations is both counterproductive and unsustainable. Indonesia emphasizes that proliferation concerns are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements.

Indonesia continues to advocate that the universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) be made a priority and urges states, which are not yet parties, to immediately accede to the NPT as non-nuclear states.

In line with the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint 2025, Indonesia envisions a Southeast Asia that is not only a nuclear weapons-free zone but also a region that is free of all other weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, Indonesia stands ready to intensify the ongoing efforts between ASEAN and NWSs to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty with a view to the signing and ratifying of the Protocol of SEANWFZ by the NWSs at the earliest.

Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy

On the other hand, Indonesia believes that non-proliferation policies should not undermine the inalienable rights of States to acquire, have access to, import or export nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

The inalienable right of each State to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy, including the sovereign right to develop full national nuclear fuel cycle, for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

During the working visit of the Director General of IAEA, Yukiya Amano on 5-7 February 2018, Indonesia and IAEA signed a practical arrangement on enhancing technical cooperation among developing countries and strengthening South-South cooperation which covered a three-year period (2018-2021). In 2020, IAEA also requested Indonesia to be a pilot country for its project in tackling plastic pollution.

Indonesia has been at the forefront of technical cooperation in such fields as enhancing food security and plant breeding, where Indonesia has assisted trainees from Asian and African countries. In this regard, help was extended by the National Nuclear Energy Agency (or now National Research and Innovation Agency/BRIN) which is a designated IAEA Collaborating Centre engaged in developing new crop varieties to improve agricultural yields and food security.



IV. Transnational Crimes

Illicit Drug Trafficking

Indonesia faces the complex reality, trends and existing problems of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. For Indonesia, comprehensive efforts being taken to combat illicit drug trafficking must also include strict and proper law enforcement measures against drug traffickers.

Indonesia has found some indications that the pandemic also plays a role in intensifying the connection between drug trafficking and other organized crimes, such as trafficking in person, corruption and arms smuggling. In facing this challenge, Indonesia continues to implement our obligations as enshrined in the convention as well as the 2009 Plan of Action, including through effective use of law enforcement measures.

The prevalence of drug abuse from 2019 to 2021 has increased. According to national prevalence data in 2021, there was an incline of around 0.15% from 3.41 million people (1.80%) to 3.66 million people (1.95%). Furthermore, Indonesia has also become one of the biggest targets for narcotics distribution by international networks. These facts clearly show the complex reality, trends and existing circumstances Indonesia is facing. For Indonesia, comprehensive efforts being taken must also include strict and proper law enforcement measures against drug traffickers.

There are 1124 types of NPS that have been reported worldwide until February 2022 (from EWA UNODC), but only 87 NPS were found in Indonesia. There are 75 types of NPS that are listed in the Ministry of Health Appendix Number 4 Year 2021, while 12 others have not been regulated.

Indonesia plays an active role in various multilateral meetings such as the 65th Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna on 14-18 March 2022, the Extraordinary Session of the Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) Asia and the Pacific on 23 September 2021, and Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS) 2016 in New York, United States of America, on 19-21 April 2016.

In tackling the world drug problem, Indonesia focuses its efforts in 3 (three) areas: demand reduction, supply reduction and international cooperation.

Demand reduction measures remain an integral part of Indonesia's drug control strategies with a view to reduce and eliminate the illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; and drug-related health and social risks. In light of this, Indonesia launched a National Action Plan for Strengthening the Prevention and Eradication of the Misuse and Illicit Circulation of Narcotics and Narcotics Precursors in February 2020. The Action Plan is designed as a four-pronged strategy focusing on prevention of drug abuse, eradication of illicit drugs, rehabilitation and treatment, as well as research and development.

Moreover, under Law on Narcotics, the government provides treatment and rehabilitation for victims of drug abuse. In 2021, more than ten thousand individuals received rehabilitation

services in Indonesia. The National Narcotics Board is implementing Community Based Intervention (CBI) Program that accommodates clients with special needs. The evaluation results show CBI is effective in changing the clients' behavior. CBI is a feasible solution to cope with the treatment gap in areas that lack rehabilitation institutions.

In the area of supply reduction, Indonesia focuses on eliminating the illicit production, manufacture, marketing and distribution of, and trafficking in, psychotropic substances, including synthetic drugs, as well as the diversion of and illicit trafficking in precursors.

To tackle this problem, Indonesia has established a national interdiction task force that comprises of relevant national agencies to combat illicit drugs coming in and out of Indonesia. Within the region, Indonesia initiated ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force in 2016 to combat transnational drug trafficking via sea routes, and to prevent and deter drug syndicates from using ASEAN countries' seaports to distribute illicit drugs.

Bearing in mind the different capacities and circumstances of member states, Indonesia is of the view that in addressing the world drug problem, several factors should be taken into account, such as a zero-tolerance stand against drugs, a comprehensive and balanced approach, and the sovereign rights of each country. To this end, Indonesia adopted the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016 - 2025 as a guideline to address illicit drug activities and mitigate their consequences on society. Indonesia also finished the Mid-term Review of the ASEAN Workplan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016- 2025 in 2021 to review and analyze the work plan that has been implemented in 2016 - 2020.

Indonesia believes that international cooperation remains important to deter criminal syndicates and drug traffickers. With the spirit of common and shared responsibility, Indonesia has established agreements and cooperation with other countries in the region. In light of this, the Indonesian government also organizes judicial cooperation to arrest perpetrators of organized crime involving narcotics, such as through extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA). Indonesia is a party to the ASEAN Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, and establishes 8 (eight) bilateral agreements on MLA and 11 (eleven) bilateral agreements regarding extradition.

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Indonesia is currently being nominated as a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) for the period 2024-2027. The election will be conducted through ECOSOC in 2023. Indonesia has been a member of the CND for 5 (five) times, namely in the period 1973-81, 1986-93, 1996-99, 2002-05, 2014-17. Indonesia's special interest in becoming a member of the CND is to maintain a balance in the discussion of the issue of legalization of marijuana and the capital punishment for narcotics dealers.



Trafficking in Persons and People Smuggling

Preventing and combating trafficking in persons is high on Indonesia's agenda, since many of its people fell victim. The majority of the victims of trafficking from Indonesia are Indonesian migrant workers who were sent to work abroad through illegal channels, especially domestic workers and workers in the fisheries sector.

Against this background, the Indonesian government has undertaken reforms and greater works to strengthen its efforts to combat trafficking in persons. At the multilateral level, Indonesia is a party to United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocol to Suppress, Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UNTOC since 2009.

At the regional level, together with Australia, Indonesia has established and co-chaired the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime to strengthen cooperation in preventing and combating smuggling of migrants as a shared responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination. Bali Process was attended by 49 participants consisting of 43 countries, 2 jurisdictions, and 4 international organizations) and 28 observers.

Bali Process is unique as it is the only Regional Consultative Process (RCP) involving countries of origin, transit, and destination – an added value for efforts to build the 'confidence' of countries in the region to constructively resolve irregular migration issues including people smuggling and trafficking in persons. Under the framework of Bali Process, there are number of working groups and expert groups which are also used by countries in the region to carry out dialogue and information-sharing related to the development and challenges of irregular migration issues in the region. In 2022, Bali Process will celebrate its 20th Anniversary and will hold the 8th Bali Process Ministerial Conference.

Along with other ASEAN countries, Indonesia has concluded ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children which entered into force since 8 March 2017.

On the national level, Indonesia has enacted a law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons comprising four main pillars: prevention, prosecution, and victims' protection, and the international cooperation in curbing this heinous crime. Indonesia has also established the Task Force for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons, comprised of relevant related government agencies. The Task-Force main approaches are advocacy, public awareness, protection, and joint training.

Indonesia also views that to effectively combat trafficking in persons, a global and collective response, as well as a greater understanding of its root causes are of importance. To that end, Indonesia is standing ready to work together with other countries within the framework of ARF and beyond.

V. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

As a disaster-prone country that is located along the ring of fire, the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) agenda is always high on Indonesia's agenda. Indonesia's commitment to the DRR agenda is reflected in the establishment of Indonesia's 2020-2044 Master Plan for Disaster



Management (RIPB). The plan also includes biological hazards such as the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of adaptation, mitigation and protection, and recovery. Considering its importance, commitment to DRR has increased significantly with the passing of Indonesia's 2020-2024 Mid-Term National Development Plan, in which disaster management and risk reduction are among priority development programs, particularly as investments to protect economic growth and human development. Indonesia has also achieved International Organization for Standardization (ISO) No. 22327 on a community-based landslide early warning system.

At the global level, Indonesia remains firmly committed to the strengthening of the implementation of international frameworks for disaster risk reduction. This includes the commitment on the outcome of the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) that is the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015 – 2030. Indonesia stresses the importance of international cooperation to ensure the implementation of SFDRR to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to promote best practices, knowledge sharing and technology transfer. Indonesia also emphasizes the strategic importance of monitoring frameworks at the global and regional levels such as the Global Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) and the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) to ensure the implementation of SFDRR.

VI. Maritime Security

Indonesia puts great interest in maritime issues and seeks to promote maritime cooperation at the bilateral, regional, and multilateral, levels. The White Book of Indonesian Maritime Ocean Policy highlights Indonesia's maritime priorities,

1. Management of Marine Resources and Development of Human Resources;
2. Defence, Security, Law Enforcement and Safety at Sea;
3. Ocean Governance and Institutions;
4. Economic and Infrastructure of the Marine Sector and Prosperity Enhancement;
5. Management of the Ocean Space and Protection of Marine Environment;
6. Maritime Culture; and 7) Maritime Diplomacy.

One of substantial maritime-related initiatives in ASEAN is the establishment of the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) in 2010. AMF has been playing an vital role as a platform to discuss various maritime issues under the three pillars of ASEAN (Political Security, Economic, and Socio-Cultural).

Indonesia also continued to promote maritime cooperation in other relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and East Asia Summit (EAS), and in other forums or organizations such as Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Indonesia has concluded several bilateral agreements and has been part of regional or international arrangements for managing issues of common concern, such as combating illegal activities at sea, trafficking in persons, people smuggling, illicit drug trafficking, and illegal fishing. Indonesia has arranged for separate coordinated patrols with almost all countries sharing maritime boundaries with Indonesia.



One of the main focuses of the Indonesian maritime policy is the preventing, deterring, and eliminating IUU Fishing. IUU Fishing threaten national and economic security, sustainable fisheries, human rights, and the global ocean ecosystem, including Indonesia. IUU Fishing is transnational and complex in nature should be dealt with in a comprehensive and holistic manner with emphasis on law enforcement and security aspects against the organized criminal groups.

Indonesia continues to showcase its leadership in promoting regional cooperation in fighting IUUF. We championed the development of pivotal regional non-binding instruments on IUUF, among others:

- Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices, including Combating IUU Fishing in the Region (RPOA-IUU).
- EAS Statement on Enhancing Regional Maritime Cooperation.
- ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Statement on Cooperation to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing.
- Indonesia believes it is crucial to improve information sharing and best practices and boost capacity-building activities for the region's coast guards and maritime law enforcement personnel.
- Indonesia has also established cooperation with the Global Fishing Watch (GFW) as a form of transparency of management and/or utilization of fishery resources. We hope that ARF Participants could join the concerted effort to build transparency of fisheries management in the region.
- Indonesian Coast Guard (Bakamla) and the Global Maritime Crime Program (GMCP) of the UNODC have established an arrangement to hold eight Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) Training Programme for countries in the region in 2022.

At the national level, Indonesia is preparing an “omnibus bill” that will integrate the various laws and regulations that govern its law enforcement at sea. The Bill is expected to integrate 21 laws and empower the Indonesian Coast Guard to coordinate all relevant agencies that have law enforcement authority at sea.

VII. Information Communication Technology Security

The advent of cyber capabilities provides both opportunities and challenges. Cyberspace is reshaping the international security environment and the economic and social development of nations worldwide, opening up a new world of capabilities and opportunities. However, cyber threats also pose an increasingly serious challenge to regional security.

Indonesia deems it essential for countries to strengthen cooperation in the area of capacity building, information/intelligence sharing, as well as network building among law enforcement agencies. We also emphasize the importance of Confidence Building Measures to promote cyber safety with multi-stakeholders involvement, including civil society organization and technology industries.

In the response and recovery of cyber incidents, Indonesia continues to develop Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) both CSIRT national, sectoral CSIRT, organizational CSIRT, and specific CSIRT. Development CSIRT is part of Indonesia's medium-term development plan stated in Presidential Regulation Number 18 of 2020.



In terms of strengthening policies in the cyber security sector, Indonesia is currently formulating a national cyber security strategy. In addition, to strengthen the sector vital information infrastructure, Indonesia is in the process of establishing presidential regulations related to the protection of critical information infrastructure protection. Meanwhile, at the global level, based on the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020 issued by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Indonesia is ranked 24th globally and third in the world Southeast Asia with a score of 94.88. Indonesia experienced an increase in ranking from GCI, in which Indonesia was previously ranked 41 globally in 2018.

Indonesia through the National Cyber Agency (BSSN) actively and continuously publishes guidelines practical digital media literacy and cybersecurity guide aimed at community to help increase community awareness and readiness in facing the challenges of cyber threats and the use of multiple platforms media wisely and safely.

Indonesia actively encourages cooperation and collaboration with various stakeholders, both public and private in strengthening the role and share information related to cybersecurity to create a security environment conducive national cyber. In the ASEAN regional scope, Indonesia supports increasing regional cooperation, especially in terms of increasing human resource capacity to minimize the level of gap in the ability of human resources in the cyber security sector among ASEAN Member States.

Several efforts to promote international cooperation on ICT security have been done through bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels.

- Indonesia has been selected as one of the representatives from Southeast Asia Group The UN Group of Governmental Experts (UNGGE) 2019-2021 consisted of 25 experts directly appointed by UN Secretary General.
- Indonesia has actively involved during the negotiation process of Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) 2019-2021 and continue to work collaboratively with all UN member States
- Indonesia supported the establishment of Ad-Hoc Committee on Cybercrime aimed to discuss international convention to combat cybercrime under UN mechanism.
- Indonesia join CERTs cooperation at the OIC and Asia Pacific Group CERTs since 2018.

2. The Role of ARF

ARF remains important as an inclusive forum in the Asia-Pacific region for fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation among the Participants on political and security issues of common interest and concern.

Strengthening regional peace and security will provide a conducive environment that is essential for the success of national development in each participating country. This will ultimately encourage an increase of economy of the community in the region. The pursuit of narrow national interests, at the expense of multilateralism, will only widen strategic distrusts and major power rivalries in the region.

In addressing the current evolving regional architecture, ARF must keep up its relevance by fully leveraging its potential and demonstrating its uniqueness. One of the strong points of the



ARF is that it has built a foundation for political security dialogues that encompasses both civil and military elements.

ARF is not only an institution, but is also a process through which countries in the Indo Pacific region strive to maintain dialogue and carry out activities to promote CBMs, preventive diplomacy, and conflict resolution mechanisms. A more robust, substantive, proactive, and action-oriented ARF is therefore instrumental to the process. Indonesia is strongly committed to contribute to this cause by continuously generating initiatives and actively participating in the work of the ARF.

Overall, Indonesia envisions a more robust, substantive, proactive and action-oriented ARF. Indonesia will therefore continue and remain commit to contribute to the realization of the ARF's potential through active participation, initiatives and the development of innovative ideas.





I. Japan's Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Today, the international community is facing turbulent times. The change in the balance of power in the international community is accelerating and is becoming more and more complex, and the security environment surrounding Japan is also becoming increasingly severe and uncertain.

Inter-state competition, in which states seek to shape an international order to their advantage as well as to increase their influence, is intensifying. In addition, Russia's aggression against Ukraine that started on February 24, 2022 has undermined the very foundations of the international order not only in Europe but also in Asia. Japan condemns the Russia's aggression in the strongest terms, and strongly urges Russia to cease the attack and withdraw its forces back to the Russian territory immediately.

Simultaneously, challenges to the universal values are becoming ever more severe and there is growing uncertainty over the existing order. For instance, attempts to change the status quo taking advantage of the COVID-19 crisis are observed. Threats of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, and international terrorism which is getting serious continue to constitute major challenges for the international community. Moreover, the scope of national security has further broadened to encompass economic and technological fields in recent years, requiring the enhancement of efforts regarding the security policy in these fields.

The security environment surrounding Japan is becoming severe and uncertain at a significant speed. In particular, countries with outstanding military capabilities both in terms of quality and quantity are concentrated around Japan, and there is a clear tendency of further reinforcement of military capabilities and acceleration of military activities.

Regarding terrorism, while the territory controlled by Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq and Syria has been liberated as a result of the operations against ISIL, the return to home countries or relocation to third countries of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) who had been under its influence has spread the threat of terrorism and violent extremism around the world including Asia. In April 2019, simultaneous terrorist attacks, one of the largest cases in Asia in recent years, took place in Sri Lanka, which resulted in deaths of more than 250 people including Japanese. Later in December 2019, a Japanese doctor was killed by a gun attack in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the form and background of terrorism has been diversified, as can be seen from cases in which the perpetrators' videos at the incident were disseminated via social media at once.

Recent advances in technology are invigorating activities in new domains such as outer space and cyberspace. While this presents big opportunities, it also brings about new risks and threats, therefore international rule-making is required in terms of security.



Furthermore, technology transformation which can bring about an essential change to the nature of the society and people's lives, such as IoT, 5G, AI, quantum technology, is advancing. All countries are engaged in fierce competition to develop technology, which is directly linked to their competitiveness, as well as accelerating their activities to apply technology to the realm of security. In this way, it is predictable that successes and failures in innovation might have considerable impact on the security environment.

Against these backgrounds, the Indo-Pacific region is making progress cooperating in the field of non-traditional security issues through confidence-building measures, not only in bilateral and trilateral frameworks but also in multilateral security frameworks, such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus). Japan welcomes these developments that contribute to creating a better regional security environment. Japan is eager to further promote and develop these multi-layered initiatives through the above-mentioned regional frameworks securing peace and stability of the region. On the other hand, situations surrounding the Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea are major issues that can destabilize the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region. It is essential to continue discussing these issues at the ARF.

Maritime issues including those surrounding the East China Sea and South China Sea are linked to the peace and stability of the region and are legitimate concerns of the international community. It is necessary for the international community to cooperate for the maintenance and development of open and stable seas. In the keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May 2014, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe advocated the "Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea":

- i. making and clarifying their claims based on international law;
- ii. not using force or coercion in trying to drive their claims;
- iii. seeking to settle disputes by peaceful means. These three principles gained supports from many countries, and Japan will consistently support actions based on these principles.

In this context, Japan calls for full implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) of 2002, and takes note of the progress of the negotiations towards an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC). COC should be consistent with international law in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and should not prejudice the legitimate rights and interest of all stakeholders. Diplomatic efforts such as COC should lead to demilitarization and a free and open South China Sea.

On the other hand, the international community including Japan expressed serious concerns over the continuing unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the South China Sea that could raise tensions in the region, including militarization of disputed features, dangerous and coercive use of coast guard vessels. Japan has to date consistently supported the full adherence to the rule of law in the South China Sea, and places importance on freedom of navigation and overflight as well as assistance for safe sea lanes. In this context, Japan has emphasized the importance for all the concerned parties related to the South China Sea to work toward peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law, in particular UNCLOS. In this regard, the final award rendered by the Arbitral Tribunal under UNCLOS on July 12, 2016 is final and legally binding on both parties to the dispute. In particular, coastal states need to recognize that in maritime areas pending final delimitation, they are obliged by international law to refrain from unilateral actions that would cause permanent physical change to the marine environment,



be it for military or civilian purposes. It is also of critical importance for each state to clarify grounds of maritime claims, through invoking the relevant provisions of UNCLOS on which the claims are based. Japan strongly hopes that the parties' compliance with the award will eventually lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea.

At the same time, unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea by force or coercion are unacceptable. Japan will continue to respond calmly and resolutely while strengthening coordination with the relevant countries, along with strengthening communication in order to make the East China Sea a "Sea of Peace, Cooperation and Friendship."

Japan shares serious concerns with international community over the China's Coast Guard Law, enforced in February 2021, as it includes several articles that are problematic in terms of consistency with international law. For instance, the sea areas to which the Law is applied are not clear, nor are conditions where the use of force by the Coast Guard is permitted under the Law. It is unacceptable that the tensions in the East and South China Seas are raised by the Law.

North Korea has not dismantled all of its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs). In 2021, North Korea has conducted four launches using ballistic missile technology in violation of relevant UNSC resolutions. Since the beginning of 2022, North Korea has repeatedly launched missiles with extremely high frequency and in new forms, and it is estimated the ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile)-class ballistic missile which North Korea has launched on March 24 has fallen within Japan's EEZ (exclusive economic zone) in the Sea of Japan, about 150 kilometers off Japan's mainland. As the launch of ballistic missiles have made the situation even more tense, such series of North Korea's actions threaten the peace and security of Japan, the region and the international community, and are totally unacceptable.

To this end, it is imperative for each country to fully implement the relevant UNSCRs. From this perspective, Japan will continue to steadily take measures for their implementation. The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and the Japan Coast Guard are conducting information gathering activities for vessels suspected to be in violation of UNSCRs including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels. JMSDF has found several activities strongly suspected to be ship-to-ship transfers in the East China Sea, and Japan shared information with Partner countries such as the US, the UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, France, Germany, and the Republic of Korea (ROK), notified the UNSC 1718 Committee and the Panel of Experts and published the information. Partner countries have also engaged in monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship transfers. Japan will continue to cooperate with the US, and trilaterally with the US and the Republic of Korea (ROK), and coordinate closely with the international community including China and Russia, aiming for the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

With regard to Japan-North Korea relations, Japan's basic policy remains unchanged that it seeks to normalize its relations with North Korea, through comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, and settling the unfortunate past in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration.



Japan remains concerned about the continued lack of action to improve the situation, since the coup d'état in Myanmar in February 2021. Japan has strongly urged the Myanmar military to take concrete actions to immediately stop the violence, release those who are detained, and swiftly restore Myanmar's democratic political system. Japan strongly condemns the situation in Myanmar where the use of violence is causing a large number of deaths, despite repeated calls for restraint by the international community. Japan calls for restraint of violence and a peaceful solution, in order to restore peace and stability in Myanmar.

Japan will continue to work closely with the international community including ASEAN, and make utmost efforts to improve the situation in Myanmar, so as to ensure the steady implementation of ASEAN's "Five-Point Consensus," such as the dispatch of ASEAN Chair's Special Envoy and a dialogue among all stakeholders, including pro-democracy groups.

Amid the ongoing difficult conditions, humanitarian support for the people of Myanmar is an urgent challenge. Since the coup, the Government of Japan has provided over 47 million US dollars for humanitarian assistance through international organizations. Japan will continue to actively provide humanitarian support and pay close attention to the needs of the people of Myanmar, who are facing difficult circumstances.

Ever since the announcement of "the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)" by ASEAN in June 2019, Japan has consistently expressed its full support to it.

In addition, Japan and ASEAN issued the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) in November 2020. The AOIP sets forth the rule of law, openness, freedom, transparency, and inclusivity as ASEAN's principles of action, and the Joint Statement notes that it shares fundamental principles with the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" promoted by Japan.

Japan is committed to cooperate in accordance with AOIP's priority areas, namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, SDGs, the economic and other possible areas of cooperation.

Following the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting, furthermore, Prime Minister Phuc of Vietnam, as the 2020 Chair for ASEAN, announced the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases, and in response, Prime Minister Suga stated that Japan will continue to provide support, including through technical cooperation by JICA through dispatching experts and conducting training, to ensure that the Centre develops into a robust organization that will protect ASEAN's people from the threat posed by infectious diseases. During the 24th ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting in October 2021, Prime Minister Kishida also emphasized his intention to fully support the Centre.

In 2021, Japan issued a Progress Report on its AOIP cooperation of 49 existing projects and 24 additional projects. At the 24th ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would vigorously advance efforts to achieve a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" in cooperation with ASEAN. Especially, he expressed his intention to welcome ASEAN leaders to Japan in 2023, which marks the 50th Year of the ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, and hold a Commemorative Summit meeting to raise ASEAN-Japan relations to a new stage.

II. National Security and Defense Policy

1. Japan's Security Policy

The security environment surrounding Japan is becoming more testing and uncertain. Japan cannot secure its own peace and security by itself, and the international community expects Japan to play a more proactive role for peace and stability in the world, in a way commensurate with its national capabilities. Being well aware of this, Japan will contribute even more actively to ensuring peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community. With the National Security Council (NSC) serving as a control tower, and in accordance with the National Security Strategy (NSS), Japan will continue its path as a peace-loving nation, work in close cooperation with the US and other partners as a major global player in the international community, and implement its national security policies in a steadfast manner, thereby making a more proactive contribution to peace and stability of the region and the world more than ever.

Japan's Legislation for Peace and Security took effect in March 2016. The legislation is designed for Japan both

1. to make a seamless response to any situation amid an increasingly severe security environment surrounding the country,
2. to put into concrete practice its policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, and thereby administer more proactively to the peace and stability of the international community.

As the Legislation for Peace and Security has taken effect, Japan's "use of force" is permitted, under the Constitution, to exercise the right of collective defense in a limited manner in addition to the right of individual self-defense if the "Three New Conditions," which are unmatched worldwide in terms of stringency, are met.

The legislation has expanded the range of activities in which Japan can engage in during UN PKOs. It also allows Japan to participate in internationally coordinated operations for peace and security that are outside the UN PKO framework. Furthermore, the legislation allows Japan to engage in cooperation and support activities, such as supply and transportation under certain conditions, when the peace and security of the international community is threatened including those concerning UNSC resolutions. By allowing these activities, the legislation enables Japan to better contribute to the peace and stability of the international community.

However, Japan's postwar posture as a peace-loving nation has not been changed for more than 70 years. Japan has taken various opportunities to explain both its policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" and the Legislation for Peace and Security to the countries concerned in a transparent and sincere manner, winning support and understanding from countries around the world.

Three new conditions for "Use of Force" as Measures for Self Defense

- when an armed attack against Japan occurs, or when an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.



- when there is no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan's survival and protect its people.
- use of force limited to the minimum extent necessary.

2. Japan's Defense Policy

National Defense Program Guidelines and the Medium-Term Defense Program

The National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) for FY2019 and beyond sets forth Japan's basic defense policy, the roles of Japan's defense capability, and the organizational objects for and the target level of specific organization of Self-Defense Forces, etc. Japan's security environment is becoming more testing and uncertain at a remarkably faster speed than expected when the former NDPG was formulated. The current NDPG was approved by the Cabinet in December 2018 to take measures in line with the realities of security environment it has hitherto never faced.

The current NDPG sets out the following three points:

- i. strengthening Japan's own architecture for national defense,
- ii. strengthening the Japan-US Alliance,
- iii. strengthening active promotion of security cooperation, under the basic precept of maintaining an exclusively defense-oriented policy.

Japan will strengthen each of the means by which to defend such national interests as Japanese nationals, territory and sovereignty. The NDPG calls for the building of a "Multi-Domain Defense Force" that enables

1. execution of cross-domain operations, which organically fuse capabilities in all domains to generate synergy and amplify the overall strength, so that even when inferiority exists in individual domains such inferiority will be overcome,
2. sustained conduct of flexible and strategic activities during all phases from peacetime to armed contingencies.
3. strengthening of the Japan-US Alliance as well as the promotion of security cooperation. As capabilities, especially, in new domains - space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum will remarkably enhance overall military capability to conduct operations, states are focusing on these areas.

The Medium Term Defense Program (MTDP) is, on the other hand, the first five-year defense buildup program laid out to achieve the target level for defense capabilities set forth in the NDPGs. The expenditure target for the implementation of the defense capability build-up described in this program amount to approximately 27,470 billion yen in FY 2018 prices. For the duration of this program, in harmony with other measures taken by the Government, substantive funds will be secured by means of thoroughgoing greater efficiency and streamlining in defense force development. The annual defense budgets target for the implementation of this program is expected to be around approximately 25,500 billion yen over the next five years. The amount of expenses based on contracts (material expenses) to be newly concluded to implement this program will be allocated within the ceiling of approximately 17,170 billion yen in FY 2018 prices, and the future obligation shall be managed appropriately.

Japan faces problem of rapid changes and improvements in relevant missile technology alongside an intensification of attempts to unilaterally change the status quo; rapid changes in the military balance; problems in space, cyberspace and other new domains; and economic security challenges. For that reason, Japan is currently working on drawing up a new NSS, NDPG and MTDP.

3. Defense-Related Expenditures

In addition to the cost of maintaining and operating the JSDF, defense-related expenditures in Japan include the cost of improving the living environment in the vicinity of defense facilities and support for US forces stationed in Japan.

As the budget based on the new NDPGs and MTDP mentioned above, the FY2022 defense-related expenditures budget includes an array of projects aimed at the establishment of a Multi-Domain Defense Force.

Excluding the costs related to the Special Action Committee on Okinawa or SACO (the cost of implementing the SACO Final Report to mitigate the impacts on people in Okinawa), the US forces realignment-related expenses (the portion allocated for mitigating the impact on local communities), and expenses for the introduction of new government aircraft, the expenditure budget for FY2022 has been increased by 55.3 billion yen (or 1.1 % growth rate) from the previous fiscal year to 5,178.8 billion yen, marking the ninth consecutive year of growth.

Including these expenses, the total expenditure budget for FY2022 amounts to 5,400.5 billion yen, an increase of 58.3 billion yen, or growth rate of 1.1% from the preceding fiscal year.

The FY2022 defense-related expenditure is 0.92% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with SACO-related expenses, US forces realignment related expenses, and expenses for the introduction of new government aircraft excluded, and 0.96% with the above three included. The FY2022 defense-related expenditure includes expenditure which will be transferred to Cabinet Secretariat and Digital Agency (31.8 billion yen).

4. Japan-US Security Arrangements

Given an increasingly severe security environment in the Indo-Pacific region, securing the forward deployment of US forces based on the Japan-US Security Treaty and strengthening the deterrence of the Japan-US Alliance are essential not only for the security of Japan, but also for peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region.

In order to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-US Alliance, the two countries have been expanding and strengthening cooperation in a wide range of areas, such as ballistic missile defense, cyberspace, outer space, and maritime security, including efforts made under the 2015 Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation and the Legislation for Peace and Security.

In light of the recent security environment, the US will strengthen its presence in the Indo-Pacific region, and Japan will assume larger roles and responsibilities in the Alliance. Japan and the US will further enhance cooperation with allies and partners in the region.



III. Japan's Contributions to Regional Security

1. Maritime Security

Japan is a maritime nation that has achieved economic growth through maritime trade and development of marine resources, and has pursued “Free, Open and Stable Seas.” For Japan, maritime rights and interests, which are the basis for economic survival, including the freedom of navigation and overflight, and development of marine resources, are of great importance toward securing peace and security. To ensure these maritime rights and interests in the long-term and in a stable manner, it is indispensable to maintain a maritime order and ensure safe maritime transport. Furthermore, “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” which are upheld by a maritime order governed by law and rules and not by force, are essential for peace and prosperity not only of Japan, but also of the international community as a whole. To maintain and develop “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” Japan contributes actively to maintaining and strengthening maritime order and ensuring safe maritime transport through various initiatives such as counter-piracy measures in Asia and Africa as well as close coordination and cooperation with other countries.

As part of its efforts to secure the safety of navigation in Asia, Japan had advocated the establishment of a forum to provide EAS member countries with the opportunity to discuss maritime cooperation and maritime issues in the region, which bore fruit in the form of the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) as a Track 1.5 forum. At the ninth EAMF, which was chaired by Brunei Darussalam in November 2021, Japan expressed serious concerns about and strong opposition to unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East and South China Seas, and pointed out the significance of a rules-based maritime order.

In addition, Japan took the initiative in establishing the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP). Japan has been actively contributing to the implementation of the ReCAAP by sending Executive Director until March 2022 and Assistant Director to the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) from its inception and supporting ReCAAP ISC's efforts in the area of information sharing and capacity building assistance through making financial contributions among others. For instance, the third Capacity Building Executive Programme on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia was held in Singapore in 2019. This Executive Programme provided an opportunity for the participants from 19 countries to deepen their understanding on Japan's efforts and views on such topics as the importance of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific, safety of sea lanes, freedom of navigation, rule of law at sea, enhanced cooperation among maritime law enforcement agencies, maritime domain awareness (MDA), and counter piracy and armed robbery against ships by utilizing the ReCAAP framework.

ARF plays an important role in ensuring the rule of law at sea, the freedom and safety of navigation and overflight, and peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law. In this context, Japan welcomes a number of initiatives that have been taken within the framework of ARF such as official events to discuss maritime security issues in the region. Japan co-chaired the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ARF ISM on MS) with the Philippines and the United States from August 2014 to August 2017. Together with the co-chairs, Japan worked on revising the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security.



Furthermore, Japan serves with Malaysia as the lead countries for “confidence-building measures based on international and regional legal frameworks, arrangements, and cooperation,” which is one of the priority areas for the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security. In this context, Japan hosted the ARF Seminar on Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery in Asia, in Tokyo in March 2015 (co-chairing with the US, Malaysia, and India), ARF Seminar on Regional Confidence Building and Law of the Sea, in Tokyo in December 2015 (co-chairing with Vietnam and India), the First ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on MDA in Tokyo in March 2018 (co-chairing with Malaysia), and the Second ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on MDA in Tokyo in February 2020 (co-chairing with Viet Nam). Against this backdrop and building on the successful outcomes of the past two workshops, Japan intends to organize the “3rd ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on Maritime Domain Awareness” favorably as a face-to-face meeting in Tokyo as a Track 1 activity for the Inter-Sessional Year 2022-2023.

2. Disaster Relief

Japan has provided active support in response to large-scale natural disasters in the Indo-Pacific region. During FY 2021, Japan provided emergency relief goods in six cases to assist the people damaged by major natural disasters including the volcanic eruption and tsunami disaster in Tonga for which the Self-Defense Force Units were also deployed as Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) Team for transporting relief goods and providing desalinated water. Japan will continue to work with other ARF participants and contribute to ARF activities in order to make regional disaster relief cooperation more practical and effective.

In addition, Japan is an active player in other regional frameworks as well. Within the framework of Japan-ASEAN cooperation, Japan provides mainly four types of assistance through the ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre). The first type of assistance concerns the establishment of an integrated ICT-based disaster management system. This has helped facilitate timely information-gathering and responses, and international rescue and relief operations. The second type concerns the establishment of a Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN (DELSA). DELSA has been developing a framework for stockpiling emergency relief supplies at specific locations and transporting these items to disaster-hit areas. The third type of assistance concerns the capacity building of the Regional ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT). This has helped further enhance a coordinated response to disaster emergencies by the ASEAN-ERAT. The fourth type of Japan’s assistance through the AHA Centre concerns a human resources development project (ACE Programme) in DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction). This project involves a four-month training program for officials at the DRR organization in ASEAN Member States. Japan welcomes the proactive and abstractive role the AHA Centre has played in extending humanitarian support for the affected persons in regards to the situation in the Marawi and Rakhine State.

3. Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

In the field of counter-terrorism, Japan continues to make efforts against international terrorism and violent extremism in cooperation with the countries and the regional and international organizations concerned. In this regard, at the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in Vientiane,



Laos in September 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced that Japan would provide approximately 45 billion yen over the next three years for Asia as comprehensive counter-terrorism measures consisted of

- i. improvement of counter-terrorism capacity,
- ii. measures to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism,
- iii. social and economic development assistance for creating a foundation for a moderate society. He also stated that Japan would help develop 2,000 personnel for counter-terrorism over the next three years. In September 2018, Japan had already achieved this goal one year ahead of its goal.

Japan has continuously held multilateral and bilateral counter-terrorism consultations with nations in the Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere, primarily with Southeast Asian countries, to enhance international counter-terrorism cooperation. Japan held the consultations with ASEAN, US, Australia, and UK in 2019. Furthermore, in June 2021, Japan and Indonesia held the 1st Counter-Terrorism Dialogue. To help build counter-terrorism capacity, Japan supports projects in such areas in the field of border control, aviation security, maritime security, and law enforcement under dialogue frameworks such as, the ASEAN-Japan Counter-Terrorism Dialogue (AJCTD), the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime plus Japan (AMMTC+Japan), and the Senior Official Meeting on Transnational Crime plus Japan (SOMTC+Japan). The center of ASEAN-Japan cooperation in this area is the ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime, which was adopted by the 17th Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting in Myanmar in November 2014 and expanded its scope to include international organized crime. In order to implement this declaration, SOMTC+Japan adopted its updated “SOMTC-Japan Work Plan for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime (2018-2022)” in October 2018, based on which SOMTC+Japan has further strengthened cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism and transnational crime.

Japan has also been stepping up its efforts to combat transnational crimes in the Indo-Pacific region in three major aspects. The first aspect is strengthening transnational legal frameworks. For example, Japan has been tackling drug problems in alliance with ARF member countries through measures such as the exchange of information on synthetic drugs, including new psychoactive substances (NPS), and investigative cooperation in accordance with the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and other drug-related treaties. The second aspect is supporting capacity building to combat illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and cybercrime in Southeast Asia through financial contributions to the projects of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) 2.0. For example, Japan provided financial support to a new initiative, “ASEAN-Japan Workshop on Technology-based Approach to Tackle Trafficking of Children”, which was proposed by Vietnam, through the JAIF2.0. The JAIF 2.0 also funded the ASEAN Cyber Capacity Development Project phase 2 until November 2021 and the ASEAN Joint Operations against Cybercrime until May 2022, both of which were proposed by Singapore and implemented by INTERPOL. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) continued to strengthen mutual learning and networking for anti-trafficking in person under the COVID-19 pandemic including by inviting relevant personnel engaging in measures against trafficking in persons in ASEAN countries to online-seminar to share challenges and measures of trafficking in persons in ASEAN countries. Japan also continued to contribute to the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund (CPCJF) managed by UNODC for implementation of a project to enhance the criminal justice capacity including trafficking in persons countermeasures of law enforcement authorities in Southeast Asia.



The third aspect is promoting policy coordination with various countries and international organizations. Japan actively participates in multilateral frameworks such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), and the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC). In addition, Japan makes financial contributions to the website maintenance for the Bali Process, a forum for policy dialogue, information sharing and practical cooperation on irregular immigrants and trafficking in persons. Japan also hosted the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in March 2021 in Kyoto to advance crime prevention and criminal justice in furtherance of our effort to promote the rule of law and achieve the SDGs.

4. Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

As the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan has the responsibility to take the lead in efforts by the international community to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

The global security environment has been severe in recent years. There exists an apparent divergence of views on how best to advance nuclear disarmament, a divergence that exists not only between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states but also among non-nuclear-weapon states that are exposed to the threat of nuclear weapons and those that are not. Considering these circumstances, it is necessary to persistently advance realistic and practical measures with the cooperation of nuclear-weapon states in order to promote nuclear disarmament.

It has become increasingly important under the current severe security situation that the international community maintains and strengthens the NPT. In light of this, it is important for the next NPT Review Conference scheduled for August 2022 to achieve a meaningful outcome. Japan has made a series of efforts to this end, such as the submission of the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on the elimination of nuclear weapons, as well as close cooperation through the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and the Stockholm Initiative.

Furthermore, Japan will continue to work on promoting effective nuclear disarmament measures such as the universalization and early entry into force of the CTBT, the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT, and building a reliable international verification mechanism.

Taking into consideration serious challenges to the international non-proliferation regime, Japan is engaged in outreach activities in the Indo-Pacific region with the aim of achieving three key objectives:

- i. promoting the universalization of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and reinforcing their implementation at the national level, inter alia IAEA Safeguards are the fundamental component of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and it remains our key objective to increase the number of States with the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement (CSA) and the Additional Protocol (AP);
- ii. establishing and strengthening export control systems;
- iii. raising awareness of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and enhancing related efforts. As part of these activities, Japan has been hosting a range of meetings each year, including the Asia Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation (ASTOP) and Asian Export Control Seminar. Japan has also actively participated in PSI exercises and related conferences including PSI rotation exercise in the Asia-Pacific region.

5. Cyberspace and Outer Space

Cyberattacks are becoming increasingly diversified and sophisticated. How to develop systems and capabilities to protect states, and the lives and property of the citizens from such cyberattacks



constitutes a major challenge from both national security and economic perspectives. To this end, Japan is working with other countries concerned to promote a mutual understanding of these issues in a number of areas. Countries in Indo-Pacific Region are discussing cyberspace issues under frameworks such as ARF and ASEAN+3 meetings. The ARF Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), which was endorsed at the 22nd ARF Ministerial Meeting in 2015, calls for confidence-building measures, awareness-raising, capacity building support, regarding cybersecurity. Japan is proactively participating in international meetings on these issues to boost cybersecurity in the region. From the viewpoint of the increasing importance of the situation surrounding cyberspace, ARF recognizes the value of continuing to exchange views from a comprehensive standpoint with the aim of promoting a peaceful, secure, open, and cooperative ICT environment, and preventing conflicts and crises through capacity-building trust and assistance while building confidence among nations. In April 2021, Japan co-chaired the 7th Open Ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of ICTs, and the 3rd ARF Inter-Sessional meeting on security of and in the use of ICTs as co-chair countries with Malaysia and Singapore.

In addition to these efforts, Japan has been providing support, including the capacity building of the Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) and the relevant administrative and investigative agencies, mainly in ASEAN countries. Based on the experience we have cultivated to date through support for ASEAN member states and interstate relations with the region, we will enhance support in area other than ASEAN, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region according to the “Basic Policy on Cybersecurity Capacity Building Support for Developing Countries”.

In order to maintain space security, Japan is proactively engaged in rule-making efforts in multilateral fora, in close cooperation with partners including ARF members. Especially, Japan is committed to reducing space threats through principles of responsible behaviors. In this regard, it is important to mention that on December 24 2021 a draft resolution entitled “Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviors”, co-sponsored by various countries including Japan and the United Kingdom, was adopted at the UN General Assembly with widespread support of 150 countries. Japan also expressed its welcome and support for the U.S. announcement in April 2022 not to conduct destructive, direct-ascent anti-satellite (ASAT) missile testing as a positive step towards formulating norms of responsible behavior in outer space. As one of the leading space-faring nations, Japan has also promoted bilateral dialogues on space security with such as ARF members as European Union, India and the United States.

6. Confidence building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy

Japan believes it is important for ARF to make steady progress from the first stage of the “promotion of confidence-building measure” to the second stage of “development of preventive diplomacy” and further to the third stage of “approaches to dispute settlement.” However, despite the cumulative efforts of the ARF countries have so far succeeded in facilitating confidence-building measures to a certain extent, progress toward the development of preventive diplomacy has only just begun. Japan has long been committed to conflict prevention and peace building through human resources development and other modalities means. Japan will take advantage of its expertise in these areas to further contribute to the ARF’s efforts to promote preventive diplomacy.



7. ADMM-Plus Initiatives

The ADMM-Plus, in which Defense Minister has been participating from Japan since its establishment, provides a framework for addressing a wide range of security issues common to the region. Japan is committed to this framework with the aim of developing the forum into a key pillar of regional security cooperation. Within the ADMM-Plus, seven Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) have been established to increase concrete military-to-military cooperation in handling security issues common to the region: humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR), maritime security, counter terrorism, military medicine, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian mine action and cyber security. Japan is taking part in each EWG to further enhance regional security cooperation by actively exchanging views with other countries and making proposals.

Under the framework of ADMM-Plus EWG, Japan has intensified cooperation with other member countries. In the first cycle, from 2011 to 2013, Japan acted as co-chair of the EWG on military medicine along with Singapore, conducting field training exercises on HA/DR and military medicine in Brunei in June 2013. In the second cycle, from 2014 to 2017, Japan co-chaired the EWG on HA/DR together with Lao PDR. Efforts were made to formulate a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the establishment and management of a Multinational Coordination Center (MNCC) so as to amplify the activities of assisting foreign forces that are accepted by disaster-affected countries in the event of natural or other disasters. In August 2015, for example, a table top exercise (TTX) was conducted in Lao PDR. In September 2016, exercises on HA/DR and military medicine, AM-Hex 2016, were conducted in Thailand in order to test the final draft of the SOP. At the 9th EWG meeting on HA/DR in December 2016, the SOP was adopted and it has been on the track of discussion in the framework of ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) since then. In the third cycle, from 2017 to 2020, Japan actively participated in and contributed to each EWG. In the fourth cycle, from 2021 to 2024, Japan has assumed with Vietnam the role of co-chair of the EWG on PKO, and successfully convened the first EWG under the new cycle in April 2021 by taking up Women Peace and Security (WPS) as the main discussion topic. This led to the establishment of the WPS Platform under the 4th cycle of the PKOEWG. The first WPS seminar is virtually hosted by Vietnam and Japan in September 2021 by inviting the first woman Force Commander for a UN PKO mission as a guest speaker. Based on her extensive field experience, the address greatly helped member states to deepen their understanding about women's participation in PKO. In December 2021, Vietnam and Japan virtually convened the second EWG with a focus on other important areas in PKO namely pre-deployment training and capacity building for peacekeepers. The successful event welcomed a former Force Commander of one of the UN's most operationally complex PKO missions and a senior UN official with responsibility for developing pre-deployment training and capacity building training modules and standards for peacekeepers. The EWG also received presentations from many member states who were eager to share their insights and experiences. Japan will continue its active contribution to international peace and stability by enhancing the capabilities of ASEAN member states in PKO through its strong initiatives as a co-chair of the EWG on PKO.

The ADMM-Plus is a vital framework providing the member countries with opportunities to conduct multilateral talks on a wide range of regional security issues in an open manner. Japan believes it is important to keep this framework open without putting any restriction on the issues to be addressed in the forum, while allowing the participating countries to discuss a wide range of issues in a candid manner.

IV. Japan's Future Contribution to Enhance Capability of ARF

As a framework for candid discussion on the political and security issues of the entire Indo-Pacific region, ARF has steadily contributed to confidence-building in the region. In recent years, various initiatives have been put forward in a wide range of areas, including maritime security, disaster relief, counter terrorism and transnational crime, non-proliferation and disarmament, preventive diplomacy, cyberspace, and outer space.

To further develop ARF as an action-oriented framework instead of making it serve merely as a forum for dialogue, ARF countries that co-organize each initiative need to establish practical agenda items and programs with the cooperation with stakeholders, including relevant international organizations and experts. Also, member states need to work more closely with one another to avoid duplications among initiatives and produce favorable outputs. In addition to these efforts to improve ARF functions, it is also important to strengthen cooperation with other regional security frameworks in pursuing effective synergy. The edge of the wedge is the area of disaster relief. In this particular area, similar exercises are increasingly conducted under different regional frameworks such as ADMM plus. Member states need to streamline such exercises from the viewpoint of reducing personnel and financial costs for participating countries and pursuing practical initiatives. The ARF should also address issues of the international community and members should not shy away from voicing their strong opposition to actions that undermine principles of the international community and the ASEAN charter, such as unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force.

Japan will proactively contribute to improve ARF functions and coordinate among different regional frameworks while continue to exercise initiatives in various areas.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Malaysia is a multi-racial, multi-religious country with a system of Government based on parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy. The country shares land or maritime borders with the majority of Southeast Asian countries. Malaysia has a unique role as a bridging linchpin between the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. Geo-strategically located in the middle of Southeast Asia, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and between the continental north and the maritime south, Malaysia serves as a regional hub to bridge connectivity in the cultural, commercial and security spheres. As a maritime nation with continental roots, Malaysia's security is directly tied to the stability of Southeast Asia and wider region surrounding Southeast Asia. In this regard, Malaysia's membership in ASEAN is crucial in ensuring that it could contribute to the development of the regional architecture and conduct of international relations within the Southeast Asian region as well as the promotion and maintenance of regional peace, stability and security. This is important to ensure that Malaysia's security and sovereignty are safeguarded.

While the Government seeks to safeguard Malaysia's sovereignty and other interests, these objectives are constantly subject to multifaceted risks, threats and uncertainties stemming from the ever-evolving security environment. Malaysia's present and future interests are tied to this uncertain and dynamic security environment. The increasingly volatile external environment has resulted in a wide range of uncertainties, which have the potential to undermine regional stability and global peace in the long-term. Furthermore, non-traditional threats, including those which erode human security and the environment, are escalating. These non-traditional security threats come in all forms such as extremism and terrorism, kidnapping for ransom, sea robbery and piracy as well as cyber threats. By nature, they are unpredictable, trans-boundary in nature and may occur without prior warning. These challenges cannot be addressed by one country alone and must be dealt with by countries in a collective and concerted manner.

There is a myriad of shared challenges that bind Malaysia and other regional countries together. These challenges include: those which affect nearly every country in the region; could not be handled effectively by any single country alone; and necessitate cooperation and collective action among the affected countries. Geographic proximity has brought Malaysia and its immediate neighbours into a state of interdependence in the security, economic and social spheres. A case in point is maritime security challenges. Strategically located astride the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, Malaysia is at the crossroads of key trade flows between the East and West. More than 30 percent of global seaborne trade passes through the Straits of Malacca and Singapore which makes it imperative for the littoral states, i.e. Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, to maintain and strengthen cooperation between them.

ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms continue to serve as indispensable platforms for addressing and mitigating these challenges. ASEAN Centrality and unity are the very foundation for managing major power rivalries, geostrategic dynamics and regional uncertainties. Malaysia has always underscored ASEAN's central role in leading closer cooperation, shaping the regional



architecture and ensuring peace, stability and prosperity for the peoples in Southeast Asia as well as in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. Overall, ASEAN's contribution has been crucial in creating a safe, peaceful and prosperous environment.

1. Impact of COVID-19 on Health Security

Over the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that infectious diseases have the potential to cause huge economic and social disruption. While the pandemic has recently subsided globally, COVID-19 continues to present challenges to our health capacity, thus, requiring mobilisation of essential resources for the implementation of rapid and effective health response. Prior to the advent of COVID-19, the Government took measures to bolster Malaysia's capacity for health emergency and disaster preparedness, all of which played a crucial role in responding to COVID-19. The implementation of the Malaysia Strategy for Emerging Diseases and Public Health Emergencies (MySED) has shaped and strengthened the country's robust healthcare structure to prevent, prepare and ensure rapid response to public health emergencies.

The establishment of the Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC) since 2007 is also an integral component in strengthening health security. The CPRC monitors events related to disaster, outbreak, crisis & emergencies (DOCE) and coordinates all health-related activities to ensure effective and immediate responses are given in a timely manner.

Malaysia fully supports the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) to increase capacities for the detection, prevention, and response to infectious diseases through partnerships between states. The Government has participated in the exchange of information and capacity building activities with other nations to prepare ourselves to respond to potential bioterrorism threats.

Recognizing that public health crises and inadequate health systems can undermine global security, the Government is committed to continue building Malaysia's long-term capacity to control and reduce threats of infectious diseases. Malaysia continues to improve its national health systems towards the implementation of health security strategies such as access to universal health care, preventive medicine, vaccination programmes, and epidemic control. COVID-19 will not be the last pandemic the international community will encounter. As such, Malaysia aims to be better prepared to handle and manage the next pandemic when it occurs.

II. Overview of National Security and Defence Policy

The Government is committed to pursue a multi-pronged approach to effectively defend the nation's security and interests in the Southeast Asian region. This is implemented not only through Malaysia's involvement in ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms, but also other approaches that have proven to be effective in managing regional issues. These include: bilateral diplomacy, commitment and adherence to international law and a network of partnerships involving countries within and beyond Southeast Asia. An example of such partnerships is the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), which consists of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom. To protect Malaysia's interests in the face of afore-mentioned emerging challenges and new opportunities, the Government is determined to pursue a proactive, long-term strategy.



Malaysia is committed to enhancing credible partnerships through inclusive international diplomatic initiatives. Through defence cooperation and diplomacy, Malaysia and other like-minded countries can collaborate and leverage on collective strengths and resources to achieve national security as well as regional and global stability.

Malaysia published the Defence White Paper (DWP) in 2019 which outlines Malaysia's perspectives on national, regional, and global strategic trends, its National Defence Framework, as well as serving as a long-term blue print for defence planning to pursue Malaysia's aspiration as a secure, sovereign, and prosperous nation. In this regard, the DWP is a manifestation of a higher level of transparency in the government's administration, its commitment to the principles of democracy and the importance of the whole-of-nation approach.

The DWP acknowledges Malaysia's geostrategic importance, being a maritime country with continental roots, flanked by the South China Sea and Pacific Ocean on one side and the Straits of Malacca and Indian Ocean on the other. Malaysia's geographical circumstances, situated at the heart of Southeast Asia's strategic waters surrounded by important Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) and taking into account major power rivalry and competition, requires Malaysia to maintain a firm and prudent national defence strategy.

The DWP defines Malaysia's defence strategy as centred on three pillars, namely:

1. **Concentric Deterrence:** Malaysia's national defence is pursued along the concentric areas that cover land, maritime, air and cyber electromagnetic domains. These are categorised into three geographic areas:
 - ii. **Core Area:** The land masses of Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah, and Sarawak; the territorial waters; as well as the air space above them;
 - iii. **Extended Area:** The Malaysian Maritime Zone (MMZ), strategic waterways, airspace and critical lines of communications; and
 - iv. **Forward Area:** Covers locations beyond the extended area, where Malaysia's national interests are involved.
2. **Comprehensive Defence:** Adopting the whole-of government and whole-of-society approaches to defend the country, in line with the spirit of Total Defence.
3. **Credible Partnerships:** To build Malaysia's credibility as a dependable partner through bilateral and multilateral defence cooperation with external partners, as well as to contribute to defence readiness, security needs and regional stability of Malaysia and its partners.

The DWP also emphasises the importance of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches towards defence. Hence, Malaysia's security and defence strategy requires the support of the rakyat (people) to win any armed conflict. Engaging the rakyat and all relevant stakeholders is a component of Total Defence or Pertahanan Menyeluruh (HANRUH), in which every member of society plays a role in defending the nation. Introduced in 1986, HANRUH is an approach that emphasises the involvement of every level of society, government agencies, private sector, non-governmental organizations and the people at large in national defence and security. Therefore, educating the rakyat about the emerging security issues is essential to galvanise their involvement and to do their part in defending the country.



DATA CONTRIBUTION TO ARF ARMS REGISTER Provide all requisite information as per the following subcategories:	
i. TOTAL DEFENCE EXPENDITURE ON ANNUAL BASIS	TOTAL DEFENCE EXPENDITURE ON ANNUAL BASIS (2022) Defence expenditure: Operating expenditure: RM11,100,000,000 (USD2,620,706,670) * Development expenditure: RM5,040,000,000 (USD1,189,942,488) * Total defence expenditure: RM16,140,000,000 (USD3,810,649,158) * Defence expenditure as a percentage GDP: 1.07% Defence expenditure per capita: RM483.92 (USD116.13)* *Exchange rate as per March 2022 (USD1 = MYR4.1975)

1. National Contributions to Promote Regional Peace and Security

i. Counter-Terrorism

International terrorism is an ongoing global threat that has a direct impact on the security of Malaysia. Extremist and terrorist elements both within and outside of Malaysia continue threaten the peace and stability of the country. Terrorist activities such as spreading radical ideology, recruitments, suicide attacks and kidnappings have caused chaos, instilled fear and threatened public safety in various parts of the region. Extremist threats throughout the world are often linked to online self-radicalisation. Malaysia will continue to actively combat all forms of terrorism and extremism at the international levels. As part of a holistic anti-terror campaign, the Government has established the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT); placing Malaysia in a leading position to tackle region-wide security issues.

The Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) continues its efforts in strengthening regional cooperation, driven by regional organisations such as ASEAN. Malaysia's contributions towards regional counter-terrorism efforts can be illustrated by SEARCCT's involvement in the ARF and collaborations with ASEAN dialogue partners. SEARCCT stepped up its efforts to build on a whole-of-society approach in preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE) by working with a diverse range of stakeholders, which include engagements and collaborations with the academia, law enforcement, government officials, media professionals, youth, and civil society organisations.



According to the 2022 Global Terrorism Index (GTI), which is produced by the Institute of Economics and Peace which provides indicators include the number of terrorist incidents, fatalities, injuries and hostages in 163 countries, Malaysia recorded major improvement in 2021, ranking 63rd on the index. This suggests that in the recent years, Malaysia has been less afflicted by terrorism and violent extremism. While global and local movement restrictions may have apparently restricted the mobility and interactions of violent extremists and terrorists, it might be premature to assume that terrorist threats and activities in Malaysia have fully subsided.

Non-traditional security challenges such as terrorism remains a concern to Malaysia as well as other countries in the region. Cooperation among countries is therefore important especially in the sharing of intelligence and information to fight terrorism, especially the movement of terrorists across borders, kidnap for ransom, transboundary criminal activities, piracy and sea robbery. Although measures taken to combat COVID-19 such as the Movement Control Order in Malaysia have significantly reduced instances of terrorist attacks, terrorists have taken this opportunity to use the cyberspace to recruit potential terrorists, especially via the social media.

ii. Promoting a People-Centred Approach to Counter-Terrorism Early Warning Early Response (EWER)

As part of ongoing efforts to identify and curtail the threat of violent extremism in Malaysia, SEARCCT collaborated with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) and EU STRIVE ASIA on 'Early Warning Early Response (EWER)' to develop Malaysia's very own manual or guide on pre-radicalisation and radicalisation indicators. Two workshops were conducted in this regard:

- Early Warning: Developing a Malaysian Guide on Violent Radicalisation; and
- Early Response: Community-Level Interventions to Prevent Violent Radicalisation.

These workshops involved participants from various government agencies, academicians and civil society organisations. The aim of these workshops was to explore the role of community actors on detecting the warning signs of violent radicalisation and carrying out early intervention programmes, altogether contributing to a whole-of-nation preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE) strategy.

iii. Developing Effective Evidence-Based Programs for Enhancing Resiliency (DEEPER)

DEEPER is a series of round-table discussions and expert consultations leading to a workshop with the aim of raising awareness and empowering selected civil society organisations (CSOs) that might be open and strategically situated for SEARCCT to collaborate with on PCVE programmes. The workshop centred on a primary focus of providing the necessary technical and organisational skills to plan, develop and implement programmes, with specific emphasis on developing proposals that have the greatest chance of achieving measurable objectives and fulfilling either pre-determined or course-corrected goals.

iv. Media Handbook

The Media Handbook project aims to instil information literacy, and enhance the capacity and role of media practitioners in Malaysia in the prevention of violent extremism and terrorism in the country. The development of the media handbook was made possible through a series of



focus group discussions and consultations with editors, journalists, television news producers, news correspondence, stringers, etc. to gather input on recommendations to further refine the final output, focusing on improving national strategic communication strategies, particularly with regard to the role of the media in strengthening community resilience through countering disinformation.

v. Common Identity: Values for an Inclusive and Cohesive Society 1.0 (CIVICS 1.0)

CIVICS 1.0 is a 2-day online youth workshop and media production (image) by university students from local public universities. The aim of the workshop is to raise awareness among the youths on the threat of extremism and radicalism as well as to cultivate the importance of the values of unity among the community. SEARCCT partnered with the youth to produce counter/alternative narratives themed on community resilience to be disseminated via social media. Around 30 students from local universities around Malaysia participated and produced more than 20 image-based alternative narratives.

vi. Technology & Innovation in Building and Enhancing Resilience (TIBER)

TIBER is a one-day physical workshop on the production of media products in the form of video content to increase awareness among youth of the threat of violent extremism and radicalisation especially on digital platforms, as well as to cultivate the importance of unity within communities and digital resilience. Around 30 students from local universities around Klang Valley participated and produced more than 10 video-based alternative narratives made via the Tik Tok application.

vii. The No-Book Book Club Podcast

In 2021, SEARCCT initiated a podcast called the 'No-Book Book Club' which discussed on various PCVE-related topics. Four (4) episodes have been published on Spotify, namely:

- Understanding the Definition of Violent Extremism;
- Perspectives of Female Terror Offenders;
- Terrorist Use of Internet; and
- Youth and Their Voices.

The podcast gained listeners from Malaysia, Germany, United States and Australia.

viii. University Lecture Series

In 2021, SEARCCT organised 3 University Lecture Series with the objective of promoting awareness among university students on the influence and elements of terrorism and violent extremism. The lectures focused on terrorism and counter-terrorism trends and narratives, youth and preventing violent extremism, and Malaysia's approach in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE).

ix. Promotion of Inter-Civilization Dialogue

SEARCCT has organised a webinar on 'Principles of Social Cohesion in Building a Nation Free from Extremism' which discussed on the diverse social and cultural values of Malaysia's multiracial society and how nation-building efforts could be marred by the destructive elements such as terrorism and violent extremism.

x. Cooperative Counter-Terror Action on Border Security

In terms of capacity building, SEARCCT co-organised a two-series webinar with the Australian Department of Home Affairs on 'Border Targeting Methods/Terrorists at the Border'. The objective of the webinar was to enhance knowledge on the key principles of border targeting and passenger assessment methodologies.

xi. Strengthening Policies Related to Countering the Financing of Terrorism

In terms of capacity building, in 2021, SEARCCT co-organised a webinar with the Australian government, Department of Home Affairs and Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) on 'Responding to the Changing Terrorism Financing Threat Environment'. The objectives of the webinar were to improve understanding of financial intelligence and its coordinated use to disrupt money laundering, terrorism financing and other serious crime. Terrorism is also a topic which is regularly deliberated in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM-Plus. Malaysia's regional involvement in combatting terrorism includes the following:

- Malacca Straits Patrols (MSP) in 2004 with Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia; and established Trilateral Corporation Arrangement (TCA) in 2016 with Indonesia and the Philippines to improve maritime security conditions in the Sulu and Sulawesi Seas. These initiatives focus on securing the sea lines of communications to ensure safe passage of vessels, prevent illegal cross-border activities, sea robbery, and piracy, as well as combatting movement of foreign terrorist fighters. These initiatives involve the conduct of maritime air and sea patrols, immediate assistance for people and ship in distress, conduct sharing of information and intelligence as well as serves as hotline of communications between member states;
- ASEAN Our Eyes Initiative under ADMM, adopted at the 12th ADMM in 2018. This initiative aims to enhance information and intelligence exchanges at strategic level among ASEAN Member States to combat terrorism through the use of ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI), a secure telecommunication connection between Defence Ministers of ASEAN member states.
- ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Counter Terrorism (ADMM-Plus EWG on CT) since its establishment in 2011. Malaysia actively participates in the EWG activities, such as meetings, conferences, and exercises with other ADMM-Plus members, aimed at capacity building through practical defence cooperation and confidence building measures between ASEAN and Plus dialogue partners in counter terrorism.



Under the ambit of the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime (ARF ISM on CTTC) Work Plan 2019-2022, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand co-chaired the ARF Seminar on the Role of Youth in Building Digital Resilience to Prevent and Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism (VECT) held on 15 March 2022. 112 participants from ARF Participating Countries as well as the ARF Unit participated in the Seminar. The Seminar was divided into three sessions with each co-chair moderating a session, as follows:

- **Session 1 focused on the Role of Youth in Building Digital Resilience and participated by distinguished speakers such as Professor Greg Barton**, Research Professor in Global Islamic Politics at the Alfred Deakin Institute (ADI) and Senior Fellow at Hedayah, Abu Dhabi as well as Mr. Thomas Koruth Samuel, a Consultant for the United Nations. The speakers highlighted the behavioural indicators model where the purpose of the model is to identify the changing behaviours in social relations, especially youth, and simultaneous social change. Furthermore, the speakers noted that the surge in the use of social media in the past few years have enabled narratives to reach a far wider audience and assisting violent extremists to spread their ideologies.
- **Session 2 was on Moderating Online Content.** The speakers for this session were from Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand. During the session, the speakers emphasized the following points:
 - i. the vast internet sphere makes the effort to track terrorist/extremist content very challenging. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the target audience/vulnerable group and raise the awareness against violent extremism. To this end, internet vendors play an important role;
 - ii. the importance of education in making the internet a safer place for everyone. Social media should also play a role in moderating online content, especially harmful speech;
 - iii. countering violent extremism online requires a multipronged approach that combines system-wide changes to how online service providers are inhospitable to radicalizing hate speech and violent content;
 - iv. social media can host content intended to subtly radicalize online users, especially young people. Young people are the ones engaging, creating, remixing, and sharing online content. Thus, it is only right to get young people involved in decision-making on content that impact them. Youth involvement will assist policymakers in making classification decisions, consultations, and keeping policymakers connected to what is happening in the digital world.
- **Session 3 focused on Mainstreaming Multi-Stakeholders Partnerships in Building Digital Resilience.** Speakers for this session were from Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand whom highlighted the following points:
 - i. the multi-stakeholder approach leverages the diverse strengths and approaches of various stakeholders. This is important in drawing in specific skill-sets, understanding context on the ground, and navigating identity politics in developing solutions to address violent extremism conducive to terrorism, including in areas related to digital resilience;
 - ii. Younger people's involvement would also enable better engagement to enhance digital resilience;
 - iii. Nations can work together to exchange information, expertise, and best practices to fight violent extremism, radicalisation, and terrorism;
 - iv. Young people are spending more time online and being influenced by all kinds of misinformation and disinformation from a variety of sources.



On 12 May 2022, Malaysia, the European Union (EU) and New Zealand co-chaired the 18th ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ARF ISM on CTTC). Substantive discussions focused on the five Priority Areas under the ARF ISM on CTTC Work Stream, namely: Developments on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime through ASEAN-led Mechanisms; Illicit Drugs; Preventing and Countering Extremism; CBRN matters; and Trafficking in Persons. ARF Participating Countries reported on recently completed activities as well as upcoming ones under each Priority Area. There were also discussions on the Future Direction of the ISM on CTTC, during which ARF Participating Countries were able to exchange views on the current Work Plan and new activities. As an outcome of the ISM, the Meeting agreed to extend the Work Plan by one year to 2023, to make up for the disruption and delay in the implementation of several activities caused by COVID-19. The Meeting also agreed to extend the term of the current co-chairmanship by one year, i.e. 2020-22 to 2020-2023.

In this connection, SEARCCT continues its efforts in strengthening regional cooperation, driven by regional organisations such as ASEAN. Malaysia's contributions towards regional counter-terrorism efforts can be illustrated by SEARCCT's involvement in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Other platform such as the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), has provided SEARCCT with the opportunity to include participants from the Southeast Asian region and beyond in the Centre's programmes.

xii. Measures Against Terrorist Financing

Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), Malaysia's central bank, as the competent authority under the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001 (AMLA) continuously strengthens the implementation of its policy document on Anti-Money Laundering, Countering Financing of Terrorism and Targeted Financial Sanctions for Financial Institutions, Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBPs) and Non-Bank Financial Institutions (NBFIs). Since 2020, BNM has issued several documents to provide clarity and strengthen stakeholders' understanding on requirements relating to beneficial ownership and verification of individual customers for Customer Due Diligence (CDD).

In addition, Companies Commission of Malaysia (SSM) and BNM have recently issued a joint reference note to provide further guidance and clarity on the requirements relating to beneficial ownership of legal persons. The reference note intends to strengthen reporting transparency of beneficial ownership in Malaysia and ensure stakeholders have a better understanding in compliance with the reporting requirements. Malaysia has completed the fourth iteration of the National Risk Assessment (NRA) 2020. The NRA 2020 assesses several areas which include, serious crimes that pose money laundering (ML) threats, terrorism and terrorism financing (TF) risks and vulnerabilities of financial and non-financial sectors to ML/TF risks.

Arising from the outcomes of the NRA 2020, a series of recommendations have been identified to address gaps and enhance existing measures. These recommendations include establishing stronger legal and operational frameworks, implementing robust risk mitigation measures, enhancing AML/CFT capacity and capabilities, and strengthening coordination and collaboration. Key findings on serious crimes, financial and non-financial sectors, alongside the recommendations can be accessed at: <https://amlcft.bnm.gov.my>.



As the custodian of financial intelligence under AMLA, BNM collaborates closely with law enforcement agencies (LEAs), as well as financial institutions to share relevant information on criminal modus operandi, techniques, and threats to encourage vigilance and responsiveness in addressing the evolving nature of such crimes. Malaysia's public-private partnerships, known as MyFINet or Malaysia Financial Intelligence Network continue to discuss cases initiated by the LEAs. The main purpose of MyFINet is to facilitate a more systematic intelligence sharing on specific crimes and current topical issues between LEAs and financial institutions in managing significant threats to the nation. These partnerships have resulted in swifter and more targeted sharing on crimes.

In addition, there is also a recent collaborative effort to curb the use of mule accounts and scams. BNM has established a swift information exchange mechanism with the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) and issued guidance to financial institutions to ensure timely and appropriate action taken against scam perpetrators and mules syndicates. The effort is also supported with cross-collaboration on awareness programmes through social media and public channels.

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

Malaysia strongly believes that the total elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) must remain at the top of the international agenda. Malaysia is convinced that the complete elimination of such weapons would significantly contribute towards international peace and security.

Malaysia reaffirms the significance of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty as the disarmament and non-proliferation instrument in the ASEAN region. Malaysia welcomes the readiness of the Nuclear Weapon States to resume consultations on the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty and encourages States Parties to the SEANWFZ Treaty and the Nuclear Weapon States to intensify ongoing efforts to resolve all outstanding issues, in accordance with the objectives and principles of the Treaty, pertaining to the signing and ratifying of the Protocol to that Treaty at the earliest.

Malaysia remains committed in preventing the proliferation of WMDs and their related technologies and delivery systems. In this regard, Malaysia is Party to a number of international instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation of WMDs, among others the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) as well as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Malaysia is also a Signatory State to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

xiv. Supporting National Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540

Malaysia has undertaken necessary measures to implement the obligations stated in UNSCR 1540 (2004). Malaysia has listed these measures in the national implementation reports submitted to the UNSCR 1540 Committee in October 2004 and April 2018 respectively. Both reports have been published by the UNSC 1540 Committee on its website.



In Malaysia, control of nuclear and technology-related items is regulated by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) through the Strategic Trade Act 2010 [Act 708.] Malaysia enacted the Strategic Trade Act 2010 (STA 2010) on 5 April 2010 in order to fulfil the obligations stipulated in the resolution. The STA 2010 came into force on 1 January 2011 and provides for the control of exports, transshipment, transiting and brokering of strategic items and technology, including arms and related materials, as well as other activities that will or may facilitate the design, development and production of WMDs and their delivery systems and related uses.

The Strategic Trade Act (STA) 2010 [Act 708], is the legislation that controls the export, transshipment, transit and brokering of strategic items and technology, including arms and related materials, as well as activities that will or may facilitate the design, development, production and delivery of WMD. This Act is consistent with Malaysia's international obligations on national security. Under this Act, AELB is the responsible authority of Category 0 Nuclear Materials, Facilities, and Equipment for Dual-Use Item. By implementing this Act, Malaysia fully adheres to its obligation under Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 of the United Nations (UN).

In order to give full effect to the provisions of the STA, several subsidiary legislations were also enacted. After seven (7) years of implementation, the STA 2010 underwent its first amendment, known as the STA (Amendment) 2017. The purpose of the amendment was to adapt the STA to the changing dynamics of proliferation scenarios and at the same time ensuring its compliance with the relevant UNSCR without discouraging trade activities. The STA (Amendment) 2017 came into force on 8 September 2017.

The Atomic Energy Licensing Act 1984 provides for the regulation and control of atomic energy, for the establishment of standards on liability for nuclear damage and for matters connected therewith or related thereto. Under section 3 of Act 304, the Atomic Energy Licensing Board (AELB) was established on 1 February 1985. The AELB acts as an enforcement body for Act 304 which includes regulations and other subsidiary legislation made under this Act. The AELB, with the support of the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MOSTI), intends to enact an Atomic Energy Bill to replace Act 304 for the purpose of strengthening the provision of safety, security and supervise the usage of atomic energy implicitly and comprehensively.

The enactment of this Bill will ensure adequate protection to workers, the public, and the environment from the harmful effects of ionizing radiation, controls on security and safeguards, and demonstrate the Government's commitment and transparency in ensuring implementation of relevant international obligations within the country. This process is needed to improve and strengthen the national atomic energy legal infrastructure and governance system, to be in line with new developments of the use of atomic energy applications and nuclear technologies related in Malaysia; which are widely used in supporting the country's economic growth. These improvements are also aimed at providing the country's legal infrastructure ecosystem that is equivalent and competitive with the international atomic energy legal control regime. The bill is currently under review by MOSTI.

Malaysia signed the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (INFCIRC/140) on 1 July 1968, which subsequently came into force on 5 March 1970. Malaysia reaffirms that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the cornerstone of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. The balanced implementation of the three pillars of the NPT serves as the foundation for the pursuit of general and complete nuclear disarmament.



Under Article III (INFCIRC/140), Malaysia concluded a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (INFCIRC/182) with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which came into force on 29 February 1972. This is in line with Malaysia's standing and policy which supports the concept of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, as well as Malaysia's unwavering commitment to realizing the long-overdue goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Under the Safeguards Agreement, Malaysia has welcomed regular IAEA Safeguards Inspectors for the annual Physical Inventory Verification (PIV). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the IAEA Safeguards Inspectors followed standard operating procedures (SOP) and health protocols before carrying out their duties in Malaysia. The PIV was conducted successfully. The AELB, as a State Regulatory Authority, is responsible for safeguards implementation and maintaining the State System of Accounting for and Control (SSAC) in Malaysia by ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the declared information of nuclear materials.

On 22 November 2005, Malaysia signed the Additional Protocol to Safeguards Agreement (AP), which sets out the responsibility to control and report any activities related to nuclear items and technology to the IAEA. The Atomic Energy Bill, which is being enacted to replace Act 304, will be the comprehensive national nuclear law to facilitate Malaysia to become a party to various conventions, agreements and protocols governing the issues of nuclear terrorism and nuclear security, including ratification of the IAEA Additional Protocol. Hence, Malaysia continues to undertake efforts concerning nuclear safeguards as part of its confidence-building measures in the non-proliferation regime.

Through a Letter of Intent (LOI) between the AELB and the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the Workshop on Safeguards Implementation for Malaysian Decision Makers and Outreach of the IAEA Additional Protocol was successfully convened on 14-15 July 2021. The workshop's objective was to raise awareness among Malaysian policymakers and senior officials on the need for the ratified Additional Protocol, which would provide additional tools for verification. The representatives from various ministries and agencies such as MOSTI, MITI, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH), National Security Council (NSC), Royal Malaysian Customs Department, Malaysian Nuclear Agency, and Atomic Energy Licensing Board attended the workshop.

Malaysia is also participating in the pilot phase of the new initiative launched by the IAEA, namely the Comprehensive Capacity-Building Initiative for State Systems of Accounting for and Control (SSACs) and State Authority Responsible for Safeguards Implementation (SRAs) (COMPASS), implemented since 2021. This decision was made during the IAEA General Conference 2020 (IAEA GC-64). The Kick-Off Meeting was successfully organized on 10 June 2021 to officiate the COMPASS project. Under this initiative, a customized assistance package has been developed jointly by the AELB; Medical Radiation Surveillance Division, Ministry of Health; and IAEA.

This package is reflected in the COMPASS Work plan 2021-2022, which outlines a timeline for implementation, performance indicators, and expected outcomes. There are six (6) types of assistance that have been agreed upon: outreach, training, equipment, legal and regulatory assistance, expert support, and technology information support. This work plan signifies Malaysia's efforts and goals in strengthening the nuclear safeguards. With the implementation

of the COMPASS initiative, it is highly expected that Malaysia will gain positive impact in improving effectiveness of Malaysia's nuclear materials accounting and control system and enhance the regulatory body responsible for the implementation of safeguards.

xv. Non-Proliferation

Malaysia has always maintained a principled position on general and complete disarmament of WMDs and that measures to achieve this goal should be through the multilateral process. Malaysia believes that there is a need for all States to enhance efforts to attain the general as well as the complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction including nuclear weapons, and is fully committed and strongly supportive of the objective of combatting the proliferation of WMDs and sensitive related materials. Malaysia is of the view that the elimination of such weapons, especially nuclear weapons, must remain at the top of the international agenda, as it significantly contributes towards international peace and security.

Malaysia recognises the role of the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Malaysia holds the view that nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology must be addressed comprehensively in all their aspects in a balanced manner, in line with the three pillars of the NPT.

Malaysia chaired the 2019 NPT Preparatory Committee, which took place from 29 April to 10 May 2019 in New York, and will chair the Main Committee I on Nuclear Disarmament during the upcoming 10th NPT Review Conference, scheduled to take place on 1-26 August 2022 in New York. Malaysia looks forward to contributing towards a successful Review Conference, both in its national capacity and as the Chair of Main Committee I on Nuclear Disarmament. Malaysia hopes that the upcoming Review Conference will bring States Parties together towards achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, despite the challenges facing the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

Malaysia ratified the TPNW on 30 September 2020. As a State Party, Malaysia is committed to adopt the necessary measures to implement its obligations under the Treaty. Pursuant to Article 2 of the Treaty, Malaysia submitted its declaration of non-possession of nuclear weapons to the UN Secretariat on 17 February 2021. During the first anniversary of the entry into force of the TPNW, Malaysia released a media statement to welcome the marking of the occasion on 21 January 2022.

Malaysia continues to support activities under the ambit of the ARF relating to disarmament and non-proliferation issues. Malaysia co-chaired with Canada and New Zealand the 7th, 8th and 9th ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ARF ISM on NPD) in 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively, and continues to participate in ARF ISM on NPD meetings, most recently in April 2022 via video conferences.

Malaysia recognizes the contribution of the CTBT to global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Malaysia continues to host a Radionuclide Monitoring Station (RMS) as part of the monitoring and verification installations under the Treaty since 2008. Malaysia also served as Chair of the CTBT Organisation Preparatory Commission from June to December 2019.



With regard to arms control, Malaysia remains supportive of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and had played a constructive role during the negotiations leading up to the conclusion of the Treaty. Malaysia is actively pursuing the ratification of the ATT domestically, and looks forward to being a State Party at the earliest opportunity. As a State Party to the BWC, Malaysia continues to fully adhere to its obligations under the Convention. The Science and Technology Research Institute for Defence (STRIDE) under the Ministry of Defence serves as the Lead Agency for the implementation of the BWC in Malaysia. In demonstrating Malaysia's commitment to the BWC, Malaysia is currently in the process of adopting its national Biological Weapons Bill which will be part of Malaysia's legislative framework to ensure the effective implementation of the BWC.

Malaysia is committed to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the CWC. The National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention of Malaysia (NACWC), which was officially established in September 2006 in conjunction with the promulgation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) Act 2005, serves as the national focal point for effective liaison with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and assists Malaysia in fulfilling its obligation under the CWC. Malaysia assumed the membership of the OPCW Executive Council in May 2022 for the term 2022-2024.

Malaysia is actively undertaking efforts to enact the Atomic Energy Bill which will allow Malaysia to ratify and accede to the various international instruments on nuclear safety and security such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and its Protocol, the IAEA Additional Protocol and the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT). The Bill will also help strengthen Malaysia's efforts in the non-proliferation and disarmament field.

xvi. ICTs Security

As the world continues to adapt to the new normal, the number of internet users who rely on digitalisation and technological innovation have grown, particularly as governments, individuals, and businesses shift to digital platforms. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the public dependency on Internet-based services. The exponential growth in the use of the internet and open borderless nature of cyberspace has created new areas of opportunities for threat actors such as terrorists and cybercriminals to exploit the internet and cyberspace for malicious activities. Cybercriminals facing only limited restrictions can conduct worldwide and simultaneous cyber-attacks while masking their true identities. Furthermore, cyber-attacks are increasing in number, thus, increasing the potential threats to a country's defence, security, critical infrastructure and financial sectors.

As an example, the threat of state-sponsored hacker groups or Advanced Persistent Threat groups (APT) remains a major concern with reports of APT groups launching targeted attacks on government agencies and other selected economic sectors such as the telecommunications and financial sectors around this region. There is a need to enhance information sharing among governments about such activities to help nations avoid from becoming victims of such groups. Ransomware also remains a challenge globally. The Malaysia Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) received 6 reports of ransomware attacks in 2021, targeting the courier sector. Ransomware attacks have also disrupted service deliveries and resulted in major financial losses.

Hence, cyber-security has become one of the government top's priorities in promoting economic prosperity and the safeguarding the interests of the people. In this regard, Malaysia has launched the Malaysia Cyber Security Strategy 2020 – 2024 (MCSS) in the year of 2020, with the goal of governing all aspects of cybersecurity planning and implementation until 2024. Taking a whole-of-nation approach, the strategy outlines 5 Pillars, 12 implementation strategies and 113 programmes that address all aspects of Malaysia's cyber-security concerns.

To further strengthen cyber-security management, Malaysia has introduced a new National Security Council Directive No. 26: National Cyber Security Management which outlines a comprehensive cyber-security governance as well as the roles and responsibilities of relevant agencies for effective cyber-security management at the national level. By virtue of this Directive, the Government has designated the National Cyber Coordination and Command Center (NC4) as the national Computer Emergency response Team (CERT) in efforts to strengthen the country's management of computer emergency response. NC4 will serve as the primary point of contact and liaison for all the national and international agencies/organisations.

Since cyber threats and attacks are becoming more diverse and sophisticated, Malaysia recognises the need to update certain laws to accommodate new technologies and reflect new realities, particularly in the cyber-security domain. Malaysia is also currently conducting a feasibility study on the need to enact a specific cyber law. Aside from that, Malaysia is working to improve the capacity, coordination and capability for by establishing a dedicated and integrated platform for information sharing among related enforcement agencies, in order to ensure effectiveness and a swift response in combating cybercrime.

Cyber-security is a collective effort that involves all stakeholders in defending against cyber threats. In this digital age, no single entity can act alone. Therefore, cooperation among agencies and other stakeholders from various sectors are essential to enhance the national cyber security capability. The government has also prioritised cyber-security awareness and education, in addition to legislative aspects, in order to meet the challenges posed by the rapidly changing nature of cyber threats. Malaysia is developing the National Cyber Security Awareness Master Plan to raise the level of cyber security awareness among Malaysian citizens through a concerted and coordinated effort. Various advocacy and awareness programmes have been carried out in addition to concerted efforts by the local LEAs to take down the groups that are responsible for scams carried out over the internet.

Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the Public-Private-Academia Partnership and international collaboration, particularly in the following areas:

- Sharing of Information amongst relevant parties
- Cyber Incidents Response and Coordination
- Innovative and Collaborative Research
- Capacity Building
- Cyber Security Awareness and Education

Issues relating to cyber-security transcend national boundaries, involving various countries with different sets of law, practices and culture. Cross-border cyber-attacks and criminal activities have introduced several legal challenges, including the collection of evidence. Therefore, tackling cyber-security issues even within a country calls for regional and international cooperation.



Governments around the region should continue to collaborate in taking down cyber threats and work with relevant stakeholders in increasing vigilance and security measures within both the public and private sector. There is a need for international collaboration in information sharing, skills, best practices, practical legal and technical approaches, capacity building and cyber-security awareness and education.

Given the transnational nature of cyber-attacks and threats, Malaysia recognises the importance of strengthening international engagement and collaboration in order to maintain an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful cyberspace. Malaysia is committed to adhering to international cyber-security commitments and obligations, be it at the regional, sub-regional or multilateral levels including through the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ARF ISM on ICTs Security) and the Open-Ended Study Group to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs (OESG). Malaysia also recognises the importance of developing capacity in cyber diplomacy. Alongside with Japan and Singapore, Malaysia has co-chaired three (3) ARF ISM on ICTs Security and seven (7) ARF OESG since 2018. Malaysia hosted the 1st ARF ISM in April 2018 and the 5th OESG in January 2020. The role of the ARF ISM on ICTs Security and its OESG as an ASEAN-led platform is to address the challenges through confidence-building measure among ARF Participants.

Malaysia and Australia have introduced an ARF Directory of Cyber Points of Contact, with the goal of reducing misunderstanding and improving communications as well as connectivity among the ARF Participating Countries. There are currently 19 ARF Participants listed in the Directory. Malaysia and Australia are committed to encouraging the remaining ARF Participating Countries to update the Directory in the effort to achieve a full participation for better interaction and coordination among participating countries in the event of a cyber-incident.

Malaysia also welcomes the establishment of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordinating Committee (ASEAN Cyber-CC) under the auspices of the ASEAN Digital Ministers Meeting (ADGMIN). Malaysia remains committed to promoting mutual understanding to counter cybersecurity challenges. In this regard, Malaysia has introduced the ASEAN Regional Action Plan (RAP) Matrix on the Implementation of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (UN GGE) Norms of Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace to assist ASEAN Member States in taking stock and identifying the 'low hanging fruit' initiatives to implement the voluntary and non-binding norms. The initiative was supported by Singapore and the ASEAN Secretariat, and the RAP was adopted during the 2nd Meeting of ASEAN Cyber-CC on 30 November 2021.

Some of the international collaborations that Malaysia participates in are:

- Asia Pacific Computer Emergency Response Team (APCERT)
- Organisation of Islamic Cooperation-Computer Emergency Response Team(OIC-CERT)
- Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams (FIRST)
- ASEAN Digital Master Plan 2025
- ASEAN Regional Forum
- Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP)
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Furthermore, Malaysia has been a Member of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Cyber Security (ADMM-Plus EWG on CS) since its establishment in 2017. Malaysia is also co-chairing the current EWG on CS cycle (2021-2024) with the Republic of Korea (ROK). During this cycle, Malaysia and ROK aim to promote positive cyber norms among ADMM-Plus countries through the publication of a guideline known as the Cyber Security Framework, in addition to meetings and exercises.

During the 3rd ARF ISM on ICTs Security in April 2021 as well as the 4th ARF ISM on ICTs Security on 13 May 2022, Malaysia proposed to conduct a workshop on Future Cyber Legislation for ARF OESG on CBMs to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs, as one of the CBM activities to be implemented under the ARF work plan 2022-2023.

xvii. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

According to a recent report published by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), disasters related to weather, climate or water hazard occurred on average every day over the past 50 years, resulting in a daily average of 115 fatalities and USD202 million in losses. The number of recorded disasters has increased by five-fold over the 50-year period, driven by climate change, more extreme weather and improved reporting.

Each disaster is testament on the need for countries to collectively commit to increasing resilience and bolster their preparedness in facing the devastating impacts of disasters particularly to save lives and protect their hard-earned development gains. In the Southeast Asia region, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and emergency Response (AADMER) is the regional policy backbone and platform for disaster management initiatives.

To harness the momentum achieved by ASEAN over a decade through the AADMER Work Programmes which guide regional disaster management collaborations, the latest AADMER Work Programme 2021-2025 was developed based on the foundation laid out by the previous AADMER Work Programmes. It is guided by the vision set out by the AADMER to “build a region of disaster-resilient nations, mutually assisting and complementing one another, sharing a common bond in minimizing adverse effects of disasters in pursuit of safer communities and sustainable development”.

Since the ratification of the AADMER, Malaysia has committed itself towards the realization of the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, as well as the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response. Malaysia will continue to support AADMER's operational engine namely the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) as the nerve for disaster monitoring, preparedness and response, and capacity building. Among others, we are devoted to update the list of modules under the ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan (AJDRP) that has been developed to identify available assets and capabilities to increase the speed and scale of ASEAN support to disaster affected member states.

Apart from this, Malaysia's Special Malaysia Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team (SMART) stands ready to be deployed for international HADR Missions. Established on 1 August 1995, the team consists of members from the Malaysian Armed Forces, Royal Malaysia Police, and Fire and Rescue Department who are recruited through a rigorous selection process. Being an elite search and rescue team, SMART has enhanced the image of Malaysia through its various deployments abroad to assist in major disasters.



SMART has gained the UN INSARAG External Classification (IEC) in 2016, being only the second team to be accredited under the Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) category in ASEAN.

For regional preparedness, Malaysia is home to the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) as well as the ASEAN Disaster Emergency Logistics System (DELSA). Following a number of natural disaster occurrences in Southeast Asia, the World Food Programme (WFP) was looking into strengthening its facility by establishing the UNHRD in this region. During the Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004, the humanitarian community utilized Subang Airbase in Malaysia as a temporary logistics hub, further highlighting the need for a regional logistics facility.

At the ADMM in November 2007 in Singapore, Malaysia offered Subang Air Base as a disaster relief operation centre for the ASEAN region. On 25 February 2010, Malaysia and the WFP signed a Basic Agreement to host the UNHRD in Subang Airbase. The 18th ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) meeting in September 2011 (and subsequently the regional workshop) agreed to have the regional stockpile at the UNHRD Subang as it is the most feasible and cost-effective solution.

Since 2010, the Government has committed to provide USD1 million annually to support the UNHRD network. The Government also committed to provide a total of at least 12,000 sq metres for the premises which include a covered storage, space of a minimum 5,000 sq metres and another 500 sq metres for office and training facilities based in Subang Airbase. The construction of the warehouse with the cost of RM17 million was also borne by the Government. While regionally focused, the UNHRD facility in Malaysia has a global scope and supports the international humanitarian community's ability to respond to emergencies worldwide more quickly and effectively.

In supporting the implementation of AADMER and the AHA Centre, the Government of Japan has pledged funding support under the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) for the establishment of the ASEAN Disaster Emergency Logistics System (DELSA) to facilitate quick delivery of relief items in the event of disasters in the region. The DELSA Project aims to develop a disaster emergency logistic system for ASEAN through the establishment of a regional stockpile of relief items and pre-arrangements with potential suppliers and transporters. The project also aims to enhance the capacity of the AHA Centre and ASEAN Member States in disaster emergency logistic operations. It is expected that the regional stockpile will ensure quick availability of emergency relief items that can be accessed by Member States and considered as internal assets in both large-scale and especially medium-scale disasters.

To increase efficiency of response during disasters, National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) has been organising the Incident Command System (ICS) training of trainer programme since 2017 with the support from the United States Forest Service (USFS) and funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The ICS training ultimately aims to customize and embed the ICS mechanism into Malaysia's disaster management framework. Having a unified command in responding to disaster situations will enable the various organisations involved to set aside issues such as overlapping and competing authorities, jurisdictional boundaries, and resource ownership to focus on setting clear priorities and objectives for the disaster.

To date, 196 participants from 20 ministries/agencies/departments/NGOs have enrolled for the ICS training. Participants which have successfully completed all series of training courses will be recognised and accredited as ICS instructors by the USFS. Once Malaysia has enough pool of trainers, NADMA as the leading coordinating agency will embark on officially merging the ICS into the existing disaster management mechanism as espoused under the NSC Directive No. 20.

Malaysia consistently continues to mainstream disaster risk reduction agenda into the planning and development process, in line with Malaysia's commitment towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Malaysia calls for all parties in ARF to support the effort to achieve the seven global targets set by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) in 2015. Malaysia looks forward to improving the management of disaster risk and to fully transform its approach from managing disaster to managing disaster risk.

Malaysia has also been an active participant in the following activities:

- **ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR) since its establishment in 2011. Malaysia was the co-chair of the previous EWG on HADR cycle (2017-2020) with the United States.** The current EWG on HADR cycle (2021-2024) is co-chaired by Indonesia and India. Malaysia actively participates in the EWG activities with other ADMM-Plus members, aimed at capacity building through practical defence cooperation and confidence building measures between ASEAN and Plus dialogue partners in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.
- **ASEAN Militaries Ready Group (AMRG) on HADR: Malaysia proposed the formation of the AMRG on HADR** to facilitate the coordination and rapid deployment of ASEAN military personnel, assets, and capabilities to disaster areas within the ASEAN region under a single ASEAN banner. This is to promote ASEAN solidarity in responding to disaster, as well as to improve coordination, prevent redundancy in assistance provided and optimise the use of military resources during disasters. The proposal was adopted at the 9th ADMM in 2015, and the Standard Operating procedure of AMRG on HADR was adopted at the 14th ADMM in 2020.
- The Malaysian Armed Forces **regularly mobilises HADR assistance to various countries in the region**, especially through the utilisation of its Royal Malaysian Air Force transport planes to help transport aid to disaster affected areas.
- **Hosts the World Food Programme United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (WFP UNHRD)** in Subang which houses relief items ready to be transported to disaster-affected areas in short notice.
- **Malaysian Field Hospital at Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh** was set up in November 2017 to provide medical aid to Rohingya refugees. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Malaysia has closed down the Field Hospital officially in September 2020. The Field Hospital had achieved its objectives.



xviii. Maritime Security

Malaysia is committed to ensuring that its maritime areas are safe and secure for international transport, international trade and other ocean-related economic uses, in addition to protecting its sovereignty and sovereign rights.

On maritime security, Malaysia continues to undertake comprehensive efforts to ensure the safety and security of its maritime areas. These efforts have been undertaken not only to safeguard national interests, but to also ensure and contribute to the safety and security of international shipping and maritime commerce in the region.

Malaysia alongside Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand established the Malacca Straits Coordinated Patrols (MSP). And through its 2 components – the Malacca Straits Sea Patrol and the Eyes-in-the-Sky air patrols, provide comprehensive maritime and aerial surveillance to ensure maritime security in the Straits of Malacca. Malaysia, together with Indonesia and the Philippines, also have a platform under the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA) in our common efforts to strengthen maritime security, particularly to combat armed robbery against ships and kidnapping for ransom in the maritime areas of common concern in the Sulu and Celebes Seas.

A coastal state's capacity and capability which would differ from one state to another are among key factors in addressing maritime security issues. This is where capacity-building and collaborative technical assistance from regional and international partners would be very much welcomed.

Furthermore, Malaysia is also an active member of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Maritime Security (ADMM-Plus EWG on MS) since its establishment in 2011. Malaysia actively participates in the EWG activities, meetings, conferences and exercises with other ADMM-Plus members, particularly in capacity building through practical defence cooperation and confidence building measures between ASEAN and Plus Dialogue Partners in maritime security. These activities are aimed at enhancing practical cooperation and confidence building measures between ASEAN and the Plus Partners in maritime domain, while promoting efforts towards safe navigation in the region.

III. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

ASEAN will continue to face challenges. The dynamic global developments will likely intensify current challenges as well as bring about emerging ones. In this regard, collective cooperation and concerted efforts at the regional and multilateral levels are vital for countries to address these challenges together and mitigate their impacts.

In this regard, Malaysia wishes to emphasize its readiness to work with other ASEAN Member States and ASEAN's external partners in promoting peace, security, stability and prosperity. Malaysia's engagement in the ARF is anchored on the Government's commitment to uphold ASEAN centrality, promote and maintain regional peace, stability and security, and promote global development, including realising the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aligning them with regional agenda such as the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and ASEAN

Outlook on the Indo-Pacific Malaysia will continue to actively participate in various ARF programmes, such as the Intersessional Meetings (ISMs) and workshops. The ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue (DOD) and ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC) continue to be an important platform for confidence building measures among ARF participants in the defence sector.

In line with established principles and purposes of the ARF, Malaysia looks forward to continue working together with ARF Participating Countries to build on the ARF's work to-date, with the goal of addressing the region's current and emerging traditional and non-traditional security challenges. In this regard, Malaysia calls for continued cooperation within ASEAN and among the ARF Participants in promoting and maintaining a secure, stable and peaceful region through dialogue and engagement as well as focusing on commonalities to build bridges as a basis for confidence building and preventive diplomacy. Malaysia's priority is to ensure the continued peace, prosperity and stability of the ASEAN region and beyond, thereby providing an environment conducive for economic development and prosperity for all.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

ASEAN member states are working together for the lasting peace, security and stability, sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and social progress by adhering to the ASEAN CHARTER, goals, and consensus. ASEAN is a geographically important region as it connects the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. Nowadays, some countries perceive ASEAN as a crucial part of the Indo-Pacific region and are endeavoring to gain influence in the region. Hence, some countries have been persuading ASEAN countries in various means, focusing on their own interests and goals. As a consequence, it is likely to occur deviations from original ASEAN's goals and stance. Particularly, the formation of blocs in the Indo-Pacific brings the different responds and disagreements among ASEAN members. Similarly, some external countries could initiate issues that can deviate from ASEAN consensus, provisions and or lead to the disunity among member countries.

After the Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy that intends to influence in the region through close ties within military, trade, and people-to-people sectors, the Asia-Pacific strategy was developed and adopted. In other words, it is the expansion of military, political, and socio-economic issues into the Indian Ocean. With the development of Indo-Pacific strategy, the way of finding solutions among countries that are involving in the South China Sea disputes have been changed. Thus, the Indo-Pacific strategy, with the strong multifaceted rivalry, has led to the confrontation rather than the peaceful negotiation in the settlement of disputes. For this reason, it is necessary to consider the potential for impact on the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-interference in the internal affairs of member states that are included in the principles of ASEAN.

The Indian Ocean is a critical place of global trade and navigation, especially the important place between the North Atlantic and the Asia-Pacific region. As a result, some countries are increasingly interested in the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal, including the Indian Ocean and the attitudes toward security issues have also changed in these regions. After the emergence of Indo-Pacific strategy, as economic, trade, defense and security, especially maritime security have been focused, various stances of the region has been shifted.

The superpowers later sought to influence and control on political and military through the increasing competition for economic projects in the Indo-Pacific region. In addition, maritime operations are conducted in the region by giving reasons to be become free and open Indo-Pacific region. The ASEAN region has become a major hub for competition for power, which could have a significant impact on the unity and security of ASEAN countries. ASEAN member states should consider first to focus on security, stability and interests of the ASEAN region only in accord with ASEAN CHARTER, ASEAN VISION, CONSENSUS at a time of increasing competition from external powers in the ASEAN region. Interference of external powers can only be avoided, especially if there is a united stance on security in the ASEAN region. In order not to change our stances on ASEAN CHARTER, goals and common agreements, all ASEAN member states shall adhere to

them together. At the same time, ASEAN should constantly monitor the differences between member countries, the changes in stance, the decreases in compliance with common agreements and other commitments and should steer them. In these matters, Myanmar, as a member of ASEAN, will actively cooperate with the ASEAN member states in order to stand the ASEAN unwaveringly and strongly.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

Myanmar Tatmadaw upholds the three main national causes as the national policy and always takes the responsibility of national security and defence. Regarding the Defence of the Union of Myanmar, the article 42 of State Constitution (2008) has clearly promulgated that:

- a. The Union of Myanmar shall not commence aggression against any nation.
- b. No foreign troops shall be permitted to be deployed in the territory of Myanmar.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar lays down the following National Defence Policies to safeguard the national interests of the Union as well as the citizens:

- a. prevent all acts detrimental to the three main national causes which are
- b. non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of the national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty.
- c. formulate the National Defence with the People's War Strategy centered at Tatmadaw as pillar depending on the synergy of entire people.
- d. To valiantly and effectively prevent foreign aggression and interference in the internal affairs of the Union, deploying various ways and means while avoiding interference in the internal affairs of other nations.
- e. To employ a defence system that has oriented towards friendly relations with other nations in accord with the five principles of peaceful co-existence.
- f. Not to permit forming military alliance with other nations and the deployment of any foreign troops in the territory of the Union.
- g. To cooperate with international community in non-traditional security issues and anti-terrorist affairs and to render assistance when calamities occur in the Union.

1. Defence Budget (Military Expenditure)

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar allocated Defence Budget about US \$ 1 Billion from 1-10-2021 to 31-3-2022 for 2021-2022 (6 month) fiscal year.

2. National Contributions to Regional Security

For the security of the region in multiple aspects, Myanmar is actively participating and contributing her efforts to the inter-regional organizations and institutions. Myanmar became a member of ASEAN in 1997 and in the same year it also joined the Bay of Bengal Initiative of Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation – BIMSTEC. In 2014, Myanmar successfully served its chairmanship of the ASEAN for the first time since her membership. As a member of the ASEAN, Myanmar has been participating the dialogues and workshops organized by the ASEAN Regional Forum – ARF since the establishment of the institution in 1994 which host the countries inside and outside of the region.



Myanmar perceived that any act of terror is still remaining a big challenge for the security in the region especially within the ASEAN. Myanmar had decisively opposed the terrorist groups designated by some of ASEAN countries and will be continue to oppose. For anti-terrorism measure, Myanmar was a member of the team of formulating the bill but also a signatory nation of the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Among Like-Minded ASEAN member countries, and the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism-ACCT. Tatmadaw is now preparing to co-chair the ADMM Plus Expert Working Groups – EWGs with Russia on Counter Terrorism for 2020-2023 period. Myanmar is very concerned about the potentiality of making the sovereign land of a country as a safe haven of any terrorist group, and always cooperating with the like-minded countries to make sure that no terrorist group can station in the region.

For eradication of narcotic drug production and trafficking, as an observer Myanmar has been attending the annual Meetings of ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matter - ASOD even before the member of the ASEAN, and has been implementing its resolutions after becoming a member of the regional organization. For narcotic drugs control, Myanmar has signed an MOU with China, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia in 1993, and MOU for Centre of Information Sharing in Asia-Pacific with ASEAN member states and the Republic of Korea in 2014. Myanmar is closely cooperating with countries within the Greater Mekong Sub Region as well as with ASEAN member states in striving to combat narcotic drugs.

Additionally, there are joint endeavors with Yangon based US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) Thailand, Australian Federal Police (AFP) and with National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC) of China and have set up Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) along Myanmar-China, Laos and Thailand borders. These serve as main centers for exchanging information relevant to combat narcotic drugs. Myanmar has also signed Bilateral Agreements with India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Russia, Lao PDR, China, and Thailand and with United States of America to jointly combat narcotic drugs. To enforce the anti- narcotic measure of the country, the Department of Narcotic Drugs Elimination was transformed into Myanmar Police Force Narcotic Drug Suppression Division in 2013.

Myanmar had successfully hosted the meetings of 22nd ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting (22nd ACAMM) on 12 November 2021, the 11th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus Experts Working Group On Counter Terrorism Meeting from 29 to 30 June 2021 and The 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus Experts Working Group On Counter Terrorism Meeting from 21 to 22 December 2021 through videoconferencing.

Regarding non-proliferation of nuclear weapon, Myanmar has signed the additional protocol of the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty – SEANWFZ, and actively following the Plan Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Treaty on the SEANWFZ (2018-2022).

There are no ASEAN militaries' meetings and exchanges hosted by Myanmar from June 2020 to April 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic. As for Myanmar, the Union is actively participating in matters relating to counter terrorism as in regional forums, workshops, and conferences in cooperation with other ASEAN member states and international communities. ASEAN member states have to enhance the bilateral and multilateral relations and deepen military and security cooperation to respond to the challenges relating to acts of terror which we are now confronting and support us building our future nations as to be peace, tranquil and developed.



Coordination among countries will surely support for dissolving the problems and enable to confront the challenges. Moreover, the betterment of the relationship among the ASEAN member states will ensure the successful implementation processes of counter terrorism.

III. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum

With regards to the role of ARF, the contributions of the ASEAN member states based on the principles of coordination and cooperation to the stability and peace of the region are critically required. In responding to the regional security challenges by the cooperation and principles of joint actions, the role of the ASEAN member states should continue emphasizing on a more stable and secure region. Moreover, the non-traditional security threats such as natural disasters, terrorism, maritime security and transnational crimes, epidemics, food and energy security, human security, cybercrimes, climate changes and global warming are still regional concerns and the ASEAN member states should continue conducting the information sharing, capacity building, joint exercises and trainings.

ASEAN member states should continue enhancing peace and stability of the region in cooperative manner, encourage the states to sign the additional protocol of the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ), cooperate more in the areas of traditional security challenges and non-traditional security challenges that will impact regional peace and stability such as the risk of extremists and terrorists, disaster management and information security, drug trafficking, human and arms smuggling, transnational crimes, illegal migration, money laundering, sea piracy and maritime security, climate change and epidemics like Zika, Ebola and COVID-19 Coronavirus.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

With unprecedented changes in the international security landscape, regional realignments and emergence of new threats interwoven with a pandemic unseen in a century, our world has entered a new phase of turbulence and transformation. Pakistan considers peaceful coexistence with neighbours critical for its long-term prosperity and regional peace. However, strategic stability in South Asia is increasingly under threat due to inherently escalatory nature of Pakistan-India ties, growing doctrinal imbalances and development of provocative limited war strategies.

1. Situation in South Asia

In the context of South Asia, for the last several decades, the region has faced instability and challenges to peace & security due to the situation in Afghanistan and the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Pakistan has time and again reiterated its desire for peaceful and cordial ties with India. It believes that durable peace and stability in the region cannot be achieved without the resolution of unresolved disputes, including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in line with the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people. The illegal and unilateral actions of changing the demography of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir region and the gross human rights violations by the Indian occupation forces have endangered the regional security environment.

A just and lasting solution to the Jammu & Kashmir dispute, in accordance with the UNSC resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people and holding India accountable for its illegal occupation can ensure lasting peace in South Asia. United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has deliberated on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute three times since 05 August 2019. These consultations have repudiated the Indian position that Jammu and Kashmir dispute is an “internal affair” of India. A just solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in line with the UNSC resolutions and wishes of the Kashmiri people is the only way forward and essential for durable peace and stability in South Asia.

Pakistan has maintained that the resolution of the core issue of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute can open new vistas of regional cooperation and bring about peace in the region. Peace between the two nuclear armed neighbors is critical for us to focus our attention and resources on economic development.

Peace and stability in Afghanistan are essential for the long-term stability and prosperity of our region. It is important for the international community to come together to arrest the impending humanitarian catastrophe unfolding there. Pakistan has consistently called for de-linking humanitarian assistance from political considerations. Promoting sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan would require uninterrupted humanitarian aid, trade facilitation, continuous practical engagement and capacity-building programmes in various sectors. Until there are viable banking channels in Afghanistan, the Afghan economy would not be able to sustain itself.

Pakistan continues to underline the importance of Afghan inclusivity, human rights including women rights, and re-opening of girls' schools. Pakistan believes that diplomatic and political engagement of the international community with Afghanistan is essential for achieving lasting peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan. It has provided essential humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, including wheat, medicines and relief goods. Pakistan has also facilitated the United Nations and third countries in providing assistance to Afghanistan.

Pakistan continues to play an active role in Afghanistan-centered forums, such as Troika Plus, Moscow Format and Regional Countries forum (which was Pakistan's own initiative) for the shared objective of regional peace and security. Since August 2021, Pakistan has played an active part in addressing economic and humanitarian challenges in Afghanistan. It initiated an important regional forum at Foreign Ministers' level to forge regional consensus for addressing the situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan hosted 17th Extraordinary Session of OIC-CFM and 48th Session of OIC-CFM in Islamabad on 19 December 2021 and 21 March 2022 respectively to explore avenues for humanitarian support to the people of Afghanistan

2. The Russia-Ukraine Conflict

Pakistan is deeply concerned at the onset of military conflict between Russia and Ukraine which reflects the failure of diplomacy. The developing countries are the worst affected because of this conflict with rising oil and food prices in the international market. Pakistan remains committed to the universal and consistent application of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, sovereign equality of states, the right of self-determination of peoples, non-use or threat of use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of States, and peaceful settlement of disputes to ensure durable peace.

Pakistan believes that a diplomatic solution in accordance with relevant multilateral agreements, international law, and the provisions of the UN Charter is critical in the Ukrainian context. There is a need for immediate cessation of hostilities, establishment and maintenance of humanitarian corridors, provision of humanitarian assistance, sustained dialogue and continuous efforts for a diplomatic solution.

Pakistan has been in regular contact with the leadership of Ukraine and Russia and other partner countries in urging continued dialogue and diplomacy for settlement of the conflict. It believes that ARF has a role to play in bringing an end to this conflict through diplomatic means.

3. Counterterrorism

For the last two decades, Pakistan has fought valiantly against the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism. It has made enormous sacrifices in countering terrorism, both in human and economic terms, with over 83,000 lives lost and US \$126 billion cost to our economy. Pakistan has thus partnered with countries in Asia Pacific and beyond to fight against the forces of terror.

Pakistan has been a victim of terrorism planned, supported and sponsored from across our borders. With sheer resolve and determination of our people, we have managed to turn the situation around. This was made possible due to concerted efforts and sacrifices of our security forces and an all-of-society response.



We believe that a sustainable effort to end the menace of terrorism entails a comprehensive approach, that necessitates special attention to eliminate the root causes and drivers of radicalization leading to extremism and violent conduct.

Pakistan strongly believes that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any race, religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. The rise of populist and supremacist ideologies and fascist forces has emerged as a new threat to international peace and internal harmony within societies. Pakistan is also deeply concerned about the rising incidents of xenophobia and islamophobia and is partnering with likeminded countries to counter this threat.

4. Pakistan's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic

Despite witnessing four waves of the Covid-19 pandemic, Pakistan has been successful in managing its spread and impact on our country and economy. Proactively visualizing the scale of calamity in January 2020, a National Cabinet Committee was formed a month before the first positive case was reported in the country. This was followed by the establishment of a multi-stakeholder National Command & Operation Centre (NCOC) in end March 2020 to synergize national efforts against COVID-19.

Pakistan's policy to fight the pandemic was focused on testing, tracing and aggressive vaccination coupled with calibrated application of Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions. With smart lockdowns and channelizing social behavior through effective media campaign and coordinated decision making Pakistan was able to successfully battle the pandemic while protecting the livelihoods of our people. The integration of digital technology in the counter-pandemic policy and response played a vital role in flattening the COVID-19 incidence curves and maintaining low mortality rates in Pakistan.

5. Nuclear Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

As a responsible nuclear state, Pakistan subscribes to the mutually reinforcing objectives of ensuring equal and undiminished security for all and preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. It has put into place a robust legislative, administrative and enforcement mechanism to regulate the transfer of sensitive goods and technologies while ensuring their 360-degree safety and security.

The following measures have been undertaken by Pakistan in this context:

- Enacted Exports Control Act – 2004 to guarantee the controls over export, re-export, trans-shipment and transit of goods, technologies, material and equipment related to nuclear and biological weapons and missiles, prohibiting the diversion of controlled goods and technologies etc. with stringent penal provision to counter the violations.
- Strategic Export Control Division (SECDIV), set up in 2007, leads inter-agency consultation to take immediate effect to the decisions taken by the UNSC, and the rules under the Export Control (Licensing and Enforcement) notified in 2009. These rules set out complete procedures for licensing, enforcement, investigation, prosecution and implementation of the Act.



- In August 2018, Pakistan established Inter-Agency Committee for Coordination, Review and Monitoring Committee (CRM Committee) to effectively implement, supervise and monitor the enforcement of UNSC resolutions/decisions on countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- Pakistan has also declared adherence to NSG Guidelines and shown keen interest in joining the four export control regimes i.e., NSG, MTCR, AG and Wassenaar Arrangement.
- Pakistan has joined Nuclear Security Contact Group (NSCG) to contribute to advancing implementation of nuclear security commitments and building a more strengthened, sustainable and comprehensive global nuclear security architecture.
- As a participant of Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) since 2007, Pakistan has been proactively participating in its various activities.
- Nuclear security regime of Pakistan includes not only technological systems, but the human resources needed to manage, operate, administer and maintain equipment.
- Pakistan has established Center of Excellence (CoE) for human resource development and technical support for effective nuclear security.

Chemical Weapons Convention:

- The National Authority on Chemical Weapons Convention (NA CWC), constituted under CWC Implementation Ordinance-2000 regulates export and import of chemical weapons related materials and equipment. It oversees implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, ensures chemical safety and security and conducts regular national and international trainings and awareness/outreach programmes. It also coordinates OPCW inspections in Pakistan. Till date, OPCW has conducted 25 inspections in Pakistan.
- Pakistan continuously updates its regulatory framework and is currently in the process of updating CWC Implementation Rules (2010) to further broaden the scope of safety and security procedures and guidelines in procurement, production, storage, transfer, usage, import and export of chemicals.

Biological Weapons Convention:

- Since its ratification of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) in 1974, Pakistan has instituted a comprehensive legislative, regulatory and administrative framework to regulate life sciences in Pakistan and to strengthen export control systems on biological agents and toxins. Additionally, Pakistan has strengthened the national export control system on biological agents and toxins and brought it in conformity with the Australia Group.
- While BWC continues to be challenged by the absence of a compliance/verification mechanism, Pakistan has a national BWC implementation bill under consideration in the Parliament. The draft legislation comprehensively prohibits designing, development, manufacturing, stockpiling, transport, import, export, sale, acquisition and possession of biological agents and toxins including their means of delivery.

- Pakistan regularly submits Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) under BWC as a useful tool for increasing transparency and building trust among States Parties in implementation the Convention.

Pakistan's role in the UN Peacekeeping Missions

Peacekeeping is a key tool at the disposal of the United Nations and the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. Pakistan's role in peacekeeping is underpinned by national consensus and is an integral part of its foreign policy. Our participation in UN peacekeeping, spanning over six decades, is the most tangible manifestation of contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Pakistan's first UN peacekeeping mission began in 1960 in Congo and since then, over 200,000 of our personnel have served with professionalism and distinction in 46 UN Missions in almost all continents of the world. Seven (7) Pakistani peacekeepers have been honored with UN posthumous awards during 2014-2015.

Pakistan was the first country to contribute women peacekeepers with the deployment of Female Engagement Teams (FET) in Congo in 2019. Around 450 Pakistani women peacekeepers have participated in United Nations Missions. Pakistan also became the first country to achieve the goal of deployment of 15 percent women staff officers. It has also achieved 50 percent female participation across our community engagement platoons in UN peacekeeping Missions. Deputy Superintendent Shahzadi Gulfam from Pakistan received the first-ever UN International Female Police Peacekeeper Award in 2011 for her outstanding performance. In September 2021, an officer of the Police Service of Pakistan, Helena Iqbal, was appointed as police commissioner in UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS).

Pakistan is also host to UN's first peacekeeping mission, UNMOGIP and is devoted to the mandate and smooth functioning of this Mission. It engages constructively in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and contributes constructively to strengthen international peacekeeping architecture in face of the changing nature of conflict, new requirements and emerging trends.

6. Transnational Organized Crime

Transnational organized crime poses serious challenge to the international community. It undermines the rule of law, threatens peace, violates human rights and impedes sustainable development in varying degrees in different countries across the globe. Combating transnational organized crime is thus a priority for Pakistan. Pakistan believes that peace and the rule of law are pre-requisites for socioeconomic development at the domestic, regional and international levels. It has thus actively contributed to global efforts as well as policy discussions on transnational organized crime at the United Nations and other multilateral forums. As party to key international agreements including UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes (UNTOC), UN Convention against Corruption and the three UN Conventions on international narcotics control regime, Pakistan has consistently endeavored to strengthen international regime to fight Transnational organized crime. At the domestic level, Pakistan is taking numerous legislative,

policy and administrative measures to effectively implement its obligations under these international conventions. Pakistan is also keen to learn from ASEAN's best practices and experiences in fighting transnational organized crime and stands ready to share its experience as well.

II. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum

Future of ARF and National contributions to enhancing the ARF and regional security.

Pakistan is a consistent proponent of multilateralism and an active participant in the UN and other global and regional organizations and groupings. It considers ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as an important platform for peace and security in Asia-Pacific. Pakistan thus strives to contribute constructively to its agenda-setting, policy formulation, and normative development. It is a leading voice on issues of sustainable and equitable development, climate change, debt relief, illicit financial flows, maritime security and peacekeeping. Pakistan has always maintained that the international community needs to coordinate efforts in averting risks to international peace. However, it is concerned that multilateral mechanisms and groupings are at times in competition with each other due to certain powers that wish to impose their agenda, ignoring the spirit of multilateralism and cooperation.

The ARF faces unprecedented challenges today in the face of myriad conflicts and tensions across the globe, including Ukraine-Russia conflict, growing US-China rivalry, lingering dispute of Jammu and Kashmir, Palestine, economic and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and situation in Myanmar. On all these issues, Pakistan's position has been consistent and in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN charter. Its contributions to international peacekeeping, global campaign against transnational organized crime, terrorism and extremism, its support for the right of self-determination of Kashmiris and for peace in Afghanistan and South Asia are inspired by these ideas.

We believe that all disputes must be settled peacefully through dialogue and within the confines of international legal norms. Conflict and war are not in the interest of any country especially the developing countries which face greatest difficulties because of the instability in markets that arises because of the conflict. We are already witnessing the rising oil and food prices in international market because of Ukraine-Russia conflict. Pakistan also believes that ARF has tremendous potential if it can address both conflict management and inclusive security cooperation simultaneously. The ARF can contribute more meaningfully to peace and security in the Indo-Pacific if it undertakes to scale down specific tensions or disputes in the region and attempts to bring the stakeholders to the conflict closer.

 THE PHILIPPINES **I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment**

Strategically located at the heart of the Indo-Pacific region, ASEAN is in a critical position of playing a central and strategic role, balancing the interests of big and small states. This comes at a crucial time when geopolitical tensions and economic shifts continue to exacerbate in the midst of post-pandemic recovery.

Known to be an arena of shifting power dynamics, the Indo-Pacific remains vulnerable to complex relationships and growing strategic divergences among major powers. While these major powers try to expand their influence, the region has been navigating competing impulses—between pulling the region closer through economic and development initiatives, and consolidating control for global expansion. The volatile power relations have forced states to pragmatically engage the major powers while expanding their relations with other partners.

There are also security concerns in the region that limit cooperative actions between and among states. These include internal political challenges, longstanding territorial disputes, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. More than a year since the primacy of military authority in Myanmar, significant changes remain. The lack of concrete positive developments on the ground, such as a constructive dialogue among all parties and ending violence, remains among ASEAN's greatest challenges and burden. Aside from this, the escalating tensions from the territorial and maritime disputes in the South China Sea also continue to be of grave concern. The presence of huge Chinese maritime militia vessels and their continuing militarization, on top of the lack of a finalized Code of Conduct, have reinforced distrust towards them. These destabilizing actions go against international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as well as commitments under the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC). Another development worth noting is the emergence of the AUKUS which has garnered mixed reactions from Member States with concerns that it could trigger an arms race and encourage military competition in the region. The region is also beset by non-traditional security issues such as terrorism, transnational crimes, natural disasters and humanitarian crises, and cybercrimes. These issues require an effective management of state-to-state relations and execution of timely, efficient, and long-lasting solutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be the greatest global public policy challenge. It has exposed weaknesses among states, particularly in the health sector. Economies suffered border closures, lockdowns, restrictions on mobility, and delays in manufacturing and trade. Despite this, countries are now slowly opening up their borders and societies are gradually, albeit cautiously, returning to normality. The mass inoculation of COVID-19 vaccines in many countries marks the beginning of the world's recovery from the pandemic. The challenge, however, is that the unequal distribution of vaccines among the developed and developing countries hits the most vulnerable and the poorest nations.

The fast-changing terrain in the international arena makes maintaining global stability a precarious endeavor. It is, therefore, an imperative for states in the region, external partners, and other stakeholders to enhance dialogue and cooperation to effectively address the challenges in the region. Communication among states must come hand in hand with action on the ground. This raises the need to explore new forms of cooperation and strengthening of regional mechanisms to respond to the pressing issues that the world faces today.

a. Maritime Security

For coastal states like the Philippines, maritime security is essential to national development. Free, open, and healthy seas facilitate trade, provide food and livelihood, and potentially, offer offshore hydrocarbon resources to satisfy national energy needs. The exploitation of marine resources must be balanced with the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems to give continued and sustained benefits for future generations.

Threats to free, open, and healthy seas are multidimensional and transnational. These include piracy and armed robbery at sea; maritime kidnapping and terrorism; trafficking in and smuggling of weapons, drugs, and persons; illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including poaching; intentional destruction of the marine environment; climate change; and disregard for the safety of life at sea and navigation, including engaging in maneuvers that increase the risk of collisions.

Disputes over maritime rights and entitlements also threaten maritime security. They limit the ability of coastal states to exploit marine resources and manage crimes at sea. Disregard for international law and undertaking unilateral actions, including the militarization of offshore outposts and the use of military and paramilitary assets to assert sovereignty claims, also increase tensions and undermine regional stability.

To address maritime security threats, coastal states must continuously build and strengthen their maritime law enforcement capacities. However, because of the transnational character of these threats, coastal states must also engage in sustained dialogue with each other, and regularly undertake meaningful cooperation grounded in international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and in shared values and common interests.

b. Situation in the Korean Peninsula

In an increasingly interconnected and globalized world, a robust security environment between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) should cultivate sustainable peace and verifiable denuclearization. During outgoing President Moon Jae-in's New Year's address, he gave a four-point agenda for the remaining four months of his term, namely: to achieve the complete recovery of their people, to usher in the era of a pacesetter country, to raise the quality of life to the level of advanced countries, and to institutionalize peace and to make it sustainable.¹

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the July 4 South-North Joint Statement, the first official agreement between ROK and DPRK that declared the goal of unification as the fundamental spirit of inter-Korean dialogue. In institutionalizing peace and making it sustainable, Moon emphasized the crucial role of continuous engagement in talks and cooperation in inter-Korean relations, as the international community will respond positively.² The outgoing president continues to hope for a succeeding administration that will strive for dialogue.

Around the time of ROK President Moon Jae-in's pronouncements, DPRK's Kim Jong Un discussed in his meeting with the politburo of the Worker's Party that the DPRK will consider

¹ "2022 New Year's Address by President Moon Jae-In," *THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA CHEONG WA DAE*, <https://english1.president.go.kr/BriefingSpeeches/Speeches/1130>. (accessed April 8, 2022).

² *Ibid.*



resuming the temporarily suspended nuclear and intercontinental missile (ICBM) tests, as it bolsters its defenses against the United States (US), as reported by DPRK state news agency KCNA.³ On 25 March 2022, DPRK announced that it had launched the Hwasong-17 (HS-17), considered as the biggest ICBM ever developed, and its size prompted speculation among analysts that it was designed to carry multiple warheads and decoys for missile defenses.⁴ However, since the launch, it has not been clear whether the missile was indeed the HS-17, or the smaller Hwasong-15 ICBM, or a modified version thereof.⁵ Should it be confirmed as the HS-17, there would be several key implications. It would mean that it could reach anywhere in the US with a large payload, that the ICBM is capable of putting satellites in low-Earth orbit (LEO) and that it can also be used to launch warheads against the US from the South, suggesting that further Hwasong-17 launches are likely.⁶

Regardless of which kind of ICBM was launched, it only shows how Kim Jong Un is following through with his pronouncements earlier this year. The HS-17 tests also send a political message on DPRK's power and self-reliance, reliable nuclear deterrence, industrial might, technological prowess, and its priority to build up DPRK's military capability.⁷ The DPRK, however, continues to violate various inter-Korean agreements and UN Security Council resolutions by extensively developing nuclear capabilities. The US responded by imposing sanctions on DPRK after the alleged HS-17 test, aimed at dissuading North Korea from future tests.⁸

With ROK president-elect Yoon Suk-yeol's assumption by May 2022, continuous nuclear tests by DPRK are expected to fuel distrust among parties and heighten the tension in the peninsula. Yoon promised to adopt a more aggressive strategy towards DPRK by emphasizing on the abolition of DPRK's nuclear program as a prerequisite for any engagement with them. Unification minister Lee In-young urged ROK's next administration to adopt a "very forward-looking and active policy for peace" approach toward DPRK to prevent nuclear weapons testing and to create the momentum for the resumption of dialogue.⁹

Furthermore, with the rising COVID-19 cases in the DPRK, it remains to be seen how Kim will handle the situation to balance it with its promises of resuming its nuclear tests. With regard to the ROK, this could serve as an opportunity to foster cooperation between the two countries through vaccine donations, among others, that could potentially start a dialogue; that is if Kim will start to recognize the importance of cooperation with other countries in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic.

³ Shin, Hyonhee. "N.Korea Suggests It May Resume Nuclear, Missile Tests; Slams 'Hostile' U.S." Reuters. Thomson Reuters, January 20, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/nkorea-warns-it-may-rethink-moratorium-nuclear-missile-tests-2022-01-19/>. (accessed April 5, 2022).

⁴ Al Jazeera. "Hwasong-17: North Korea's 'Monster Missile'." Weapons News | Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, March 25, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/25/hwasong-17-north-koreas-monster-missile> (accessed April 10, 2022).

⁵ Vann H. Van Diepen and Jenny Town, "North Korea's March 24 ICBM Launch: What If It Was the Hwasong-17? - 38 North: Informed Analysis of North Korea," 38 North, April 7, 2022, <https://www.38north.org/2022/04/north-koreas-march-24-icbm-launch-what-if-it-was-the-hwasong-17/>. (accessed April 8, 2022).

⁶ Vann H. Van Diepen and Jenny Town, "North Korea's March 24 ICBM Launch: What If It Was the Hwasong-17? - 38 North: Informed Analysis of North Korea," 38 North, April 7, 2022, <https://www.38north.org/2022/04/north-koreas-march-24-icbm-launch-what-if-it-was-the-hwasong-17/>. (accessed April 8, 2022).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Agence France-Presse, "US Announces New Sanctions after North Korea Powerful Missile Test," NDTV.com (NDTV, March 25, 2022), <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/us-announces-new-sanctions-after-north-korea-powerful-missile-test-2841942>. (accessed April 11, 2022).

⁹ "New S. Korean Gov't Needs 'Forward-Looking' Policy on N. Korea to Prevent Nuke Testing: Minister," koreatimes, April 5, 2022, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2022/04/103_326874.html. (accessed April 11, 2022).



Nonetheless, it is expected that the recent spike of COVID-19 cases in the DPRK will stall Kim's plans of continuous nuclear testing.

As it is still ambiguous how inter-Korean dialogue could pan out in the next year, the task now befalls on the international community to renew its commitment to fostering a long-lasting peace in the Korean Peninsula by consistently implementing sanctions and other mechanisms to deter nuclear testing and proliferation.

c. Regional Power Dynamics

The increasing geopolitical tension between and among major powers bears many implications for the region. This emerges as the most vital, long-term, strategic concern in the region, requiring a pragmatic management of relations and strengthening of existing multilateral mechanisms.

The competition for influence among regional security and development initiatives, such as that between the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), underscores the region's strategic and economic importance. The AUKUS, QUAD, and Five-Eyes are other new security initiatives that may accelerate the divide in the Indo-Pacific region, hence disrupting the international status quo. In this context, small and medium states are navigating different visions of the regional order to ensure peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. These new ideas and concepts for a regional security architecture must be harmonized with the goal of enhancing existing mechanisms, ensuring mutually beneficial cooperation, and maintaining inclusiveness. Major powers have exerted significant diplomatic and economic considerations that may impact on global security. This has left some states uncertain about the prospect of economic gains vis-à-vis the challenges in ensuring the rights of sovereign equals.

Amidst regional power competition, maintaining ASEAN Centrality is vital to managing the impact of unilateral actions of major powers and their interactions in the region. The inevitability of major powers' role in shaping global governance impels that it be realized through international and regional organizations and initiatives such as the ASEAN. To play this role, however, it is imperative for ASEAN to demonstrate collective and coherent action.

Equally important, all states must strive to become responsible stakeholders in the global community and avoid creating new global governance mechanisms if the existing ones are sufficient or need only to be reformed. Regional peace and stability will rest on the commitment and efforts by all states to a stable, open, and rules-based order.

d. Terrorism

Terrorism and violent extremism remain a major threat in the Philippines, even as the government works towards recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2022, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) identified Fahrudin Hadji Satar, alias Abu Zacariah, as the new designated emir of Dawlah Islamiyah (Islamic State) in Southeast Asia. Terrorist groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Dawlah Islamiyah and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) continue to pose a threat despite the government's relentless counterterrorism efforts in Mindanao. As countries ease their pandemic-related travel restrictions, transnational terrorist groups and foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) could potentially resume their cross-border terror activities.



The continuous activities of terrorist groups in the Philippines and the region form part of a global trend. While public health restrictions helped reduce the global impact of terrorism in 2020 and 2021 according to the 2022 Global Terrorism Index, terrorist organizations and extremists around the world have quickly adapted to new conditions by changing recruitment tactics and adopting new technologies. Terrorists have sought to capitalize on the surge in online activity amid the lockdowns by ramping up their efforts to propagate extremist content, recruit vulnerable youth, radicalize allies, and organize activities through various social media and even gaming platforms. Major events in 2021, such as the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, and the Daesh's expansion in the Sahel, further aggravated global insecurity to a world already beleaguered by the pandemic.

While the world's terrorism-related fatalities decreased in 2021, terror attacks increased in Afghanistan, and the Sahel countries, according to the 2022 Global Terrorism Index. Political unrest and widespread violence could turn fragile states into failed states, providing fertile ground for transnational terrorist groups to regroup. There were fears that the victory of the Taliban could be a massive morale boost for jihadists, particularly in Southeast Asia. Islamic fundamentalists took to social media to celebrate the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan and the US' defeat and humiliating withdrawal two decades after the invasion. This prompted the Philippine government to increase its surveillance of online activities and be on the lookout for potential violent attacks.

In Southeast Asia, terrorist groups indoctrinate and recruit new members mainly through social networks (e.g., familial, clan, and ethnic ties), informal religious schools staffed by overseas-educated radical preachers, and the cyberspace (e.g., social media and encrypted messaging apps). These extensive social networks are crucial not only in recruiting but also in financing and mobilizing terrorists, particularly since the financial tools available online, such as cryptocurrencies, among others, are not yet regulated and policies have not been adopted yet relative to these new kinds of financial transaction. Abu Zacariah has managed to evade the military by hiding among the civilian population, with the help of relatives and sympathizers. He is said to have extensive networks across Mindanao and Southeast Asia, allowing him to recruit militants to fight for Dawlah Islamiyah even while in hiding. Likewise, the ASG's resiliency lies with its tactical collaboration with other local and foreign militant groups and cultivating a cautious but cordial relationship with local communities.

While the Philippine government's successful counterterrorism efforts have severely weakened violent extremism in Mindanao compared to previous years, the government cannot afford to be complacent given the tenacity of terrorist groups. Terrorists in other parts of the world already use smartphone-enabled GPS-guided drones to carry out attacks. Technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence, 3D printing, autonomous vehicles, and cyber defense systems, are already being weaponized and may soon fall into the wrong hands. Uncertainties in the regional security environment are also exacerbated by the rapid technological advancement in unpredictable ways, which are becoming more disruptive and being exploited by adversaries through blurring or bending how warfare is conducted, to increase tension in the region. It is imperative that the government's counterterrorism strategy evolves as quickly as terrorists' adaptation to the constantly changing environment.

Weak local institutions, combined with stagnant economic development, make it difficult to root out extremism. Socioeconomic conditions, such as youth unemployment, poverty, militarization, and corruption drive vulnerable individuals to seek refuge in extremist narratives of salvation and resistance against real or perceived oppressors.



These difficulties were compounded by the movement restrictions and loss of livelihood brought by the pandemic.

Despite the localized concentration of terror and counterterror operations in maritime Southeast Asian countries, terrorism remains a transnational threat because their networking activities cuts across national borders. Therefore, the persistence of terrorism in the Philippines necessitates the government's stronger cooperation and collaboration with neighboring countries, development partners, government agencies, local government units, religious leaders, and the community. Additionally, national governments in the region must strengthen security laws and border controls, increase intelligence-sharing, encourage defection, strengthen the reintegration program, and improve community capacities. Most importantly, as the Philippines prepares for post-pandemic recovery, it is important to strengthen social and economic institutions to build inclusive, just, and resilient communities.

e. Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

The world stands on the precipice of nuclear war in Europe due to the Russia-Ukraine crisis. The crisis also brings to the fore concerns over the safety and security of nuclear power facilities in war zones, the likelihood of chemical attacks based on false pretexts, and the devastating humanitarian consequences of the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects. The view that possession of nuclear weapons is the ultimate security guarantee has become increasingly popular again, in light of the failures of international institutions as well as the effective brandishing of nuclear threats to deter interventions, with potentially grave consequences for the future of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

f. Cybersecurity

Societal changes caused by the pandemic have seemingly abated with the back-to-normal transition of many economic and social activities. Still, it is incontrovertible that the information and communications technology (ICT) dependency remains exceptionally high. The Philippines is no stranger to global interconnectivity, being the top country in social media and internet usage worldwide.¹⁰

This cyber-dependency presents challenges in personal data privacy and confidentiality, considering the still developing cybersecurity provisions and laws present in the country. According to a report conducted by the cybersecurity firm Kaspersky, for the entirety of 2021, the Philippines ranked fourth among countries most targeted by web threats.¹¹ There was also a 200-percent increase in phishing incidents in the country since the national lockdown due to COVID 19 pandemic started in March 2020.¹² The data affirms the critical necessity to implement policies that will better secure ICT infrastructure and minimize, if not mitigate, the dangers of cyberthreats.

As the Fourth Industrial Revolution continues to progress, which is characterized by changing business, models, job markets, and an unparalleled connectivity and level of data exchange,

¹⁰ Kyle Chua, "PH remains top in social media, internet usage worldwide – report," Rappler, last revised January 2021, <https://www.rappler.com/technology/internet-culture/hootsuite-we-are-social-2021-philippines-top-social-media-internet-usage/>

¹¹ "PH 4th among countries most targeted by web threats," Philippine News Agency, GOV.PH, last revised February 2022, <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1168257>

¹² Phishing is top PH cybercrime during pandemic – authorities <https://www.rappler.com/nation/phishing-top-philippines-cybercrime-during-pandemic> (accessed 22 March 2022)



it is imperative that governments adapt to the fast-changing technology to counter the possible dangers brought by the rapidly developing cyber industry. In order to respond effectively and efficiently to challenges emanating from cyberspace, national legislations on cybercrime issues must be updated, cybersecurity professionals and experts must be increased in number and must be provided with consistent training and capacity building programs, and lastly, critical infrastructure must be strengthened and improved.

II. National Security and Defense Policy

a. Overview of National Security and Defense Policy

The Philippines' National Security Council crafted the 2017–2022 National Security Policy (NSP) and the 2018–2022 National Security Strategy (NSS) that detailed the realities of the country's contemporary security paradigm while also providing strategic objectives, policy directions, and major efforts. In support of this, the Department of National Defense (DND) published the 2018–2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS), which mapped out specific plans, key priorities, and resourcing of the defense department. In 2019, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) released the National Military Strategy (NMS), which complements the NDS and NSS while providing guidance to the military in effectively responding to national security threats.

Like the rest of the world, the Philippines was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This in turn affected the country's economic performance, and temporarily shifted defense concerns to internal and nontraditional security. In response to the pandemic, the Philippines procured a variety of vaccines, including boosters, to help secure the country's immediate recovery. Moreover, the defense sector continues to play a supporting role to civilian government agencies in the country's mitigation efforts and have been primarily involved in

1. urban search and rescue,
2. logistical support,
3. military medicine,
4. implementing law and order.

The Philippines continues to develop, upgrade, and modernize its defense capabilities to achieve minimum credible deterrence. It is implementing Horizon Two of the Revised AFP Modernization Program, which is set until 2022. The Philippines also puts a premium on strengthening and diversifying its defense collaboration and security engagements with the international community to foster strategic trust and pragmatic cooperation.

b. Data Contribution to the ARF Arms Register

i. Total defense expenditure on an annual basis

1. Defense expenditure

For fiscal year 2022, the approved defense budget of the Philippines is PHP 220.9 billion (USD 4.48 billion), this is a 7.33 percent increase from PHP 205.8 billion (USD 4.18 billion) in the previous fiscal year.¹³ The defense budget also makes up 4.39 percent of the total government budget of PHP 5.024 trillion (USD 102 billion) for 2022.

¹³ Department of Budget and Management, "Recovery, Growth, and Sustainability Highlighted in the Signed FY 2022 National Budget," 30 December 2021, <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/index.php/secretary-s-corner/press-releases/list-of-press-releases/2036-recovery-growth-and-sustainability-highlighted-in-the-signed-fy-2022-national-budget>



2. Defense expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP)

The Philippines' 2021 defense expenditure (PHP 205.8 billion [USD 4.18 billion]) was 1.06 percent of its GDP (PHP 19.387 trillion [USD 393.6 billion]).¹⁴

3. Defense expenditure per capita

In 2021, the Philippine defense expenditure per capita was about PHP 1,775.63 (USD 36.05), an increase from about PHP 1,710.05 (USD 34.46) in the previous year.¹⁵

4. Total number of personnel in national armed forces and its percentage in population

Active military personnel

Philippine Army (PA)	101,000 (0.09%)
Philippine Navy (PN)	24,500 (0.02%)
Philippine Air Force (PAF)	17,600 (0.02%)

c. National Contributions to Promoting Regional Security

a. Counter-terrorism

The Philippines improved its global standing in the 2022 Global Terrorism Index. The number of deaths fell to 53 in 2021 from 97 in 2020.

This development is due not only to pandemic-related travel restrictions, but also to advancements in the Philippines' counterterrorism strategy. The Marawi siege has been a driving force behind the implementation of several inclusive counterterrorism initiatives, which focus not only on the use of military force to combat terrorist activities, but also on eliminating the socioeconomic conditions that allow radicalization and violent extremism to thrive in communities.

In the Philippines, terrorism continues to emanate from the local terrorist groups (LTGs), including the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Dawlah Islamiyah, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), and from foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), who continue to collaborate with the LTGs in carrying out terror attacks. Abu Sayyaf and Dawlah Islamiyah are the most active terrorist groups operating in Mindanao.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) launched air and ground assaults on terrorist bases and hideouts. In February 2021, the AFP captured several ASG, BIFF, and Dawlah Islamiyah bases. Many battle-weary militants surrendered to the government and took advantage of the government's reintegration program to become a productive member of society.

¹⁴ Leslie Gatpolintan, "PH GDP Grows 5.6% in 2021, On Track to Surpass Pre-Pandemic Level," Philippine News Agency, 27 January 2022, <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1166477>

¹⁵ "Philippines Population 2022 (Live)," Accessed 06 April 2022, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/philippines-population>



The Philippines strongly condemned terrorism before the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Sixth Committee last October 2020, highlighting the enactment of the 2020 Anti-Terrorism Act as pursuant to the country's commitment and adherence to relevant Security Council resolutions and to the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.¹⁶

In February 2022, the Philippines, through its Anti-Terrorism Council Program Management Center (ATC-PMC), reiterated the country's commitment and progress in counter-terrorism measures at the UN Security Council, considering the evolving situation in Afghanistan.¹⁷ During the said session, the Philippines' National Counter-Terrorism Strategy was cited, which "set[s] forth priority actions that are anchored on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy." The strategy reinforces the global pact's first and fourth pillars, which seek to address the conditions that encourage the spread of terrorism as well as violations of human rights and the rule of law.

The Philippines continues to implement its National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP P/CVE), which was adopted in 2019 in response to the growing radicalization and as a contribution to the global effort to prevent and counter violent extremism. The NAP P/CVE specifically aims to prevent radicalization leading to violent extremism through a whole-of-nation approach, or the collaboration of the government, civil society organizations (CSOs), religious sector, and other stakeholders. As of February 2022, 2,173 barangays have been capacitated through the rollout of NAP P/CVE modules nationwide.

The Department of National Defense (DND) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) are also at the forefront of promoting a people-centered approach to counterterrorism and encouraging interfaith dialogues. The DND, through the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), continues to strengthen the coordination and cooperation of relevant government agencies in combatting terrorism through the implementation of the National Security Policy (NSP) and National Security Strategy (NSS). The AFP has set its initiative to improve the understanding of radicalization and ways to counter extremism on the ground through seminars and symposia on the nature of violent extremism. It deployed Community Support Program Teams in the countryside to assess the people's needs, facilitate development, and improve governance in the area by organizing communities and linking them to appropriate government units and agencies. Promptly addressing bad governance and lack of basic services means that terrorists would have lesser issues to exploit to bolster their propaganda and recruitment narratives. Recognizing the role of education in preventing radicalization, the Community Support Program also educates community members on Islam, radicalism, and violent extremism, as well as cultural sensitivity and diversity awareness.¹⁸

The DND also contributes to addressing terrorism at the international level by sharing its experience in cooperative activities and initiatives set through the ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting (ADMM)-Plus Experts' Working Group (EWG).

¹⁶ "PH Condemns Terrorism, Cites 2020 Anti-Terrorism Act as Valued Tool in Fight Against It at UNGA Sixth Committee Opening," Department of Foreign Affairs, GOVPH, last revised October 2020, <https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/news-from-our-foreign-service-postsupdate/27947-ph-condemns-terrorism-cites-2020-anti-terrorism-act-as-valued-tool-in-fight-against-it-at-unga-sixth-committee-opening>

¹⁷ "PH highlights progress in counter-terrorism measures at Security Council open briefing," Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations, last revised February 2022, <https://www.un.int/philippines/activities/ph-highlights-progress-counter-terrorism-measures-security-council-open-briefing>

¹⁸ Philippine Mission to the United Nations, Measures Undertaken by the Philippine Government to Eliminate International Terrorism (May 2020), https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/75/int_terrorism/philippines_e.pdf



The Department has also been an active participant in establishing the sub-regional initiatives to strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation in Southeast Asia such as the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA) among the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia. This landmark cooperation is seen to bolster security in the “tri-border” area which had been porous to the threats of extremist movements, kidnapping, and piracy across the three countries. ¹⁹

The DFA, on the other hand, has been working with other government agencies and the United Nations to improve the country’s counterterrorism capabilities. The Department oversaw the conduct of high-level visits such as the UN-Counterterrorism Executive Directorate Visit to the Philippines (CTED Visit) and the UN Countering Terrorist Travel (UNCTT) Program Technical Assessment Visit, which were primarily aimed at reassessing the country’s extremism and terrorism threats. The DFA remains consistent in its steadfast commitment in fighting terrorism through international cooperation.

The Philippines’ ATC-PMC oversees inter-agency meetings and coordination undertakings that aim to set provisions on FTFs, incitement to terrorism, providing support to terrorists or terrorist groups, proscription requests from foreign jurisdictions and supranational jurisdictions, and countering extremism in schools, among others. As the secretariat to the National Security Council-Strategic Trade Management Committee (NSC-STMCOM), ATC-PMC has also been responsible for a new comprehensive bill that seeks to address proliferation financing, in coordination with the Strategic Trade Management Office (STMO) and the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC).

As the Philippines slowly relaxed its border restrictions to foreign visitors, the Bureau of Immigration (BI) sent some of its frontline officers on a rigorous five-day training and seminar on counterterrorism and anti-human trafficking. The BI plays a critical role in stopping FTFs before they reach Philippine soil. The UN-sponsored training includes methods of detecting entry of foreign terrorists using the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS), which is an electronic data exchange system that allows the bureau to receive advance information about arriving passengers. This is in line with the Philippine government’s commitment to strengthen the counterterrorism capacities of its relevant agencies to respond to national security threats.

On 22-24 February 2021, the Philippines, together with Australia and the United States co-chaired the 2nd ARF Workshop on Aviation Security and Information Exchange virtually. On 18-20 May 2022, the third and final iteration of the same workshop was held in hybrid format in the Philippines. Among the topics covered by the two workshops were challenges in counter-terrorism and aviation security in the region, tools such as Advance Passenger Information or API and Passenger Name Record or PNR, risk assessments and information sharing, watchlisting and its redress and human rights considerations, and sharing of best practices. During the third workshop held in Manila, delegates toured the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and observed its facilities.

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

The Philippines deposited with the United Nations the instrument of ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 24 March 2022, following the Philippine Senate’s unanimous concurrence of the ATT’s ratification on 26 January 2022.

¹⁹ Raymund Jose G. Quilop, “Trilateral Co-operation by Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines: Temper Expectations,” *GlobalAsia*, last revised March 2018, https://www.globalasia.org/v13no1/feature/trilateral-co-operation-by-indonesia-malaysia-and-the-philippines-temper-expectations_raymund-jose-g-quilop



This ratification, according to Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Locsin, Jr., is in line with the Philippines' commitment to "ensure international and regional peace, security, and stability through the regulation of the illicit transfer, flow, or diversion of conventional arms using internationally agreed standards." The Philippines is the first ASEAN member state to join the ATT.

In the face of intensifying great power competition and uncertainties brought about by COVID-19, the Philippines urged all states to pursue concrete steps that would reinforce the credibility of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Philippines calls on Nuclear Weapon States to honor their disarmament obligations and fully implement decisions adopted during the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, the 13 practical steps in the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and the 64-point action plan in the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Following the decision of Philippine President Rodrigo R. Duterte on 28 February 2022 to adopt a national position for the country's nuclear energy program, the Philippines is working closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure safe, secure, and sustainable use of nuclear energy.

The Philippines reiterates its commitment to preserve Southeast Asia as a region free from nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty on the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). The Philippines is ready to engage with the Nuclear Weapon States to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty.

With the support of the European Commission Joint Research Center and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the Philippines continues to promote regional and multi-agency cooperation through the hosting of the Regional Secretariat of the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative (CBRN CoE) for Southeast Asia since 2013. The CBRN CoE supports efforts in identifying CBRN risk mitigation needs, developing National CBRN Action Plans, and the formulating and implementing regional project proposals.

In line with the ASEAN Blueprint for 2025 ASEAN Political Security Community, and the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement ASEAN Regional Forum Vision Statement in the Areas of Counterterrorism-Transnational Crime, the Philippines continues to play an active role in strengthening regional cooperation and preparedness, response, and assistance in addressing CBRN threats by hosting several workshops and table-top exercises on issues such as biological threat reduction, bio-risk management, disease detection and surveillance, preparedness and response to a biological event, countering illicit trafficking of CBRN materials, and raising awareness on CBRN risk management.

On 13–15 July 2022, the Philippines, together with the Republic of Korea and the United States, will co-chair the ARF Tabletop Exercise on Response Capabilities to CBRN Incidents. This tabletop exercise aims to enhance inter-operability and coordination among concerned government agencies and the international community on how to deal with a biological incident; identify best practices, opportunities and gaps in the region's response capabilities; test national and regional action and response plans with a view towards constant improvement and updating; develop recommendations on how to improve regional response mechanisms in the event of a biological incident; and identify priority actions to strengthen national capacities in CBRN risk mitigation and response.

Maintaining international stability is a fragile endeavor, with the ebbs and flows of existing and new security challenges. However, it also offers opportunities for new forms of cooperation and strengthening of regional mechanisms. It is therefore necessary for states in the region, their external partners, and other stakeholders, to enhance dialogue and cooperation to effectively address these challenges and prevent them from further escalation. Equally important, states must move beyond commitments and ensure tangible outcomes.

c. Transnational Crime

Security challenges in the world today are increasingly transnational in nature. Among the various issues that bombard the Philippines, the proliferation of illicit drugs and trafficking in persons, are those that warrant attention.

1. Proliferations of Illicit Drugs

With the intention to prevent the spread of illicit drugs and its eventual eradication, the Philippines remains committed to pursue a proactive solution by upholding the rule of law, observing due process, and complying with international human rights conventions commitments.

The Philippine Anti-Illegal Drug Strategy (PADS) serves as the government's blueprint for harmonizing anti-illegal drugs initiatives and encourages collaboration among national government agencies with the aim of suppressing and reducing drug supply and demand in the country. Anchored on the National Security Policy and the 2017-2022 Philippine Development Plan, PADS is governed by three principles:

- evidence-based and culturally appropriate.
- comprehensive and balanced approach.
- inter-sectoral and participatory. The government provides financial grants to agencies and organizations that support commitments under PADS.

The Philippine government adopts a comprehensive, whole-of-nation approach in addressing the drug problem through prevention, education and public awareness, treatment and rehabilitation, law enforcement, and dispensation of justice. The Dangerous Drugs Board of the Philippines (DDB), the primary agency tasked to oversee matters on illicit drugs, has implemented a range of educational programs and services designed to cater to the needs of every sector of society. It has programs that engage the youth, address the needs of parents, and provide employers, educators, health professionals, policymakers, and other sectors with information on the prevention and control of drug use. Digital technology has also been utilized to carry out these initiatives.

In terms of treatment and rehabilitation, the Philippines has institutionalized Community-Based Drug Rehabilitation Programs (CBDRP) in recognition of the important role of communities in creating favorable conditions for treatment and rehabilitation of People Who Use Drugs (PWUDs). The government has provided funding to cities and provinces throughout the country to establish, maintain, and operate CBDRP facilities for mild and moderate PWUDs who would surrender voluntarily for appropriate interventions under Oplan Sagip.

On 29 January 2021, Republic Act No. 11521 was signed to strengthen prosecution and judicial measures of drug-related cases, including intensifying the investigation of dubious financial transactions of illegal drug trading activities.



Amid the pandemic, the Philippines has issued guidelines on the Use of Electronic Prescription for any legitimate transaction of medicines included in the list of dangerous drugs. The flexibility of prescribing and dispensing these items, which remain under strict monitoring, is a way to ensure that access to medical preparations containing dangerous drugs by patients with legitimate medical needs will not be hampered.

The government advocates for the reduction of drug-affectation through the implementation of the Barangay Drug Clearing Program (BDCP) that integrates supply, demand and harm reduction strategies toward forming drug-resistant and self-policing communities. The BDCP consists of three phases of implementation, with the end goal of rehabilitating and reintegrating drug users and offenders to the society and clearing communities from illegal drugs.

The Philippine government has established the Integrated Drug Monitoring and Reporting Information System (IDMRIS) that monitors the implementation of anti-drug programs by national agencies, local government units, and partner groups and organizations. IDMRIS also serves as a venue for reporting implementers of drug prevention-related programs. The government's Integrated Drug Abuse Data and Information Network (IDADIN) is an online data pooling and collection system used by Treatment and Rehabilitation Facilities nationwide for treatment, rehabilitation, and aftercare of drug dependents. IDADIN also allows authorities to monitor and determine the admission, relapse rate, and profile of drug users.

At the regional level, the Philippines supports ASEAN mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network (ADMN), which give emphasis to policy formulation and program development through data collection, sharing of best practices, and establishing accountability among ASEAN Member States. Likewise, the Philippines continues to support the implementation and realization of the goals identified in the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025.

In the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters, the Philippines serves as Chair of the Treatment and Rehabilitation Working Group, where it benchmarked its policies and best practices on institutionalizing treatment and rehabilitation initiatives with ASEAN Member States.

The government has also partnered with international organizations to strengthen cooperation and capacity-building on eliminating the spread of illegal drugs. An example of this is the collaboration with The Colombo Plan on the implementation of the Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC) with the Department of Education and the ASEAN Training Center for Preventive Drug Education in meeting the demands for evidence-based practices in substance abuse prevention.

Globally, the Philippines aligns its drug policies with international protocols, laws, and standards such as the UN General Assembly 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation toward an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem. The Philippines is also a signatory to the 1961 Single Convention of Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol; the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances; and the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

2. Trafficking in Persons

The Philippines retained its Tier 1 status in the 2021 State Department Report on Trafficking in Persons for fully complying with the standards for eliminating human trafficking. The report acknowledged the government's capacity in anti-trafficking despite the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁰

In 2022, the Philippine Senate passed a bill amending the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act to address current trends observed in cases of trafficking in persons, such as exploitation on the internet, and to maximize technology in prosecuting this crime. It was observed that there had been a Senate Bill No. 2449 holds the internet intermediaries, including social media platforms and financial and e-commerce industries, accountable for knowingly or by gross negligence allowing their infrastructure to be used for human trafficking purposes. Furthermore, the measure would enable law enforcers to pursue investigations of violations involving the use of the internet and other digital platforms upon a written order from the court. It also puts forth measures in dealing with the crime in the context of the pandemic, disasters, and other humanitarian crises. Finally, the bill seeks to provide the rescue and subsequent rehabilitation of trafficking victims.²¹

In December 2021, President Duterte signed Republic Act No. 11641, which created the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW). The new department is tasked with protecting and promoting the welfare of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and training them with the necessary skills to survive and thrive abroad. In addition, the DMW will investigate, pursue, and aid in the persecution of human trafficking and illegal recruitment cases.²²

In July 2021, the government declared July as Anti-Trafficking in Persons Awareness Month through Proclamation No. 1180. The Proclamation highlights the importance of strengthening awareness of human trafficking issues and mobilizing more advocates. It aims to instill social consciousness about human trafficking and exploitation issues among the general public, especially in vulnerable communities.²³

The Philippines continues to demonstrate serious and sustained efforts in the prosecution of traffickers and rescue of victims. The Bureau of Immigration reported 688 trafficking and illegal recruitment victims rescued in 2021.²⁴ It was a period that saw the prosecution of significantly more traffickers and defendants charged than the year prior.²⁵

The Philippines sets a standard for law enforcement collaboration. Since its launch in 2019, the Philippine Internet Crimes Against Children Center (PICACC) has rescued 373 identified trafficking victims and arrested 84 suspects. More than half of the rescues were made during the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁶ Almost a quarter of the detained subjects

²⁰ United States Department of State. 2021 Trafficking in Persons Reports. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-trafficking-in-persons-report/philippines/> (Accessed on April 9, 2021)

²¹ Senate of the Philippines. Press Release January 31 2022. http://legacy.senate.gov.ph/press_release/2022/0131_prib1.asp

²² Cristina Eloisa Baclig. High expectation on DMW: More convictions for human traffickers. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1546573/high-expectation-on-dmw-more-convictions-for-human-traffickers>

²³ Senate of the Philippines. Press Release July 7, 2021. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1146333>

²⁴ Kristine Joy Patag. Immigrations reports rescue of 688 trafficking, illegal recruitment victims in 2021. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/01/17/2154452/immigration-reports-rescue-688-trafficking-illegal-recruitment-victims-2021>

²⁵ Joyce Ann Rocamora. PH efforts vs. human trafficking rewarded in US report. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1145765>

²⁶ Jeffrey Damicog. PH's center on internet crimes against children 'sets standard for global response' - DOJ. <https://mb.com.ph/2022/03/30/phs-center-on-internet-crimes-against-children-sets-high-standard-for-global-response-doj/>



were found to operate online.²⁷ The PICACC collaborates with the international community, including the United Kingdom, Australia, and the Netherlands, to fight against online exploitation and abuse of children in the Philippines.

d. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

As an archipelago located in the Pacific Ring of Fire, the Philippines is vulnerable to natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcano eruptions, tropical storms, and floods. Climate change further heightened the intensity of these natural disasters, creating super typhoons and lengthening droughts during the dry seasons. Natural disasters have again adversely affected the country's national development in terms of agricultural losses, infrastructure damage, and the negative impact on the well-being of Filipinos, with some even being internally displaced.

The updated Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 reflects the importance of vulnerability reduction to development. According to the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA), an average of 22 tropical cyclones enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility every year. Six to seven storms cause significant damage. Super Typhoon Rai (locally known as Odette) alone has cost the Philippine agriculture sector almost six billion pesos.²⁸

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2020-2030 guides the country in implementing responsive policies and programs to manage climate change and natural and human-induced hazards. NDRRMP is anchored on global, regional, and national development and policy instruments such as the Paris Agreement, UN Sustainable Development Goals, ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, and the Philippine National Climate Change Action Plan. It adheres to the whole-of-nation and whole-of-government approaches, with vulnerability reduction being addressed on the national, local, and individual levels.

The Philippines also partners with different ARF members to build its capacity and coordinate activities for timely responses in emergencies. Capacity-building and sharing best practices are crucial in building effective response units and preparing them for action. In 2021, the Philippine Army, Japan's Ministry of Defense, and the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force conducted the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Cooperation Project. They demonstrated their capabilities in different disaster situations and exchanged ideas and best practices of past operations.²⁹ The Philippines-US Balikatan military exercises are also examples of intra-ARF partnerships that include capacity-building in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

ARF participating countries have also extended various forms of humanitarian assistance in aid of the Philippines' response to Typhoon "Odette" ("Rai") which hit the Philippines in December 2021.

²⁷ Christia Marie Ramos. *Bill strengthening law vs human trafficking reaches Senate plenary.* <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1519454/bill-strengthening-law-vs-human-trafficking-reaches-senate-plenary>

²⁸ Daphne Galvez. "Typhoon Odette damage to agriculture pegged at almost P6 billion, so far." *Inquirer*. December 28, 2021. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1532928/fwd-odette-damage-to-agriculture-reaches-almost-6-billion#ixzz7Q8MnoGtV>

²⁹ "Japan-Philippines Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Cooperation Project." Embassy of Japan in the Philippines. November 19, 2021. https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/11_000001_00639.html



As one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, the Philippines has always been a vocal advocate of the Paris Agreement and other international cooperation mechanisms in achieving adaptive and mitigative solutions. In its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted in April 2021, the country identifies its goal to achieve a 75 percent greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction by 2030. The Philippines has taken concrete steps toward combatting the climate crisis. These include localized action plans implemented by climate-vulnerable communities, the Sustainable Finance Roadmap that encourages public and private investment in green projects, and collaboration with the Asian Development Bank to accelerate the country's transition from coal to clean energy in a just and affordable manner. ³⁰

The Philippines stands with ASEAN in its commitment to addressing climate change and welcomes the ASEAN State of Climate Change Report initiative. The Philippines also supports the establishment of an ASEAN-China Mangrove Eco-Corridor, envisioned as a nature-based solution to combat climate change focusing on protecting mangrove and marine biodiversity and including all sectors in all countries across the region.

Natural disasters and human-induced hazards are never indeed confined within one state's borders; their repercussions are felt throughout the region. In moving forward, the ambitious goals in addressing climate change need to be translated from paper to practical programs and policies. International cooperation should be strengthened, from capability-building to knowledge sharing to coordinated activities during emergencies.

e. Maritime Security

As an archipelagic state, the Philippines ranks maritime security highly in its priorities. It is fully committed to resolving territorial and maritime disputes peacefully, combating crimes at sea, guaranteeing the freedom and safety of navigation, and ensuring the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources, all in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and in cooperation with regional partners and the international community. The country also takes seriously issues such as piracy and armed robbery at sea; maritime kidnapping and terrorism; trafficking in and smuggling of weapons, drugs, and persons; illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including poaching; intentional destruction of the marine environment, especially coral reef ecosystems; climate change; and disregard for the safety of life at sea and navigation, including engaging in maneuvers that increase the risk of collisions at sea.

The Philippines aspires for the South China Sea to be a sea of peace, security, stability, and prosperity. It stresses the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes, including the non-threat and non-use of force, friendly consultations and negotiations in good faith, and promoting an environment conducive to dispute settlement, in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. The Philippines also stresses the importance of defending, maintaining, and promoting the international rule of law, regional security and stability, the safety and freedom of navigation and overflight, and lawful uses of the sea, including sustainable exploration and exploitation of marine resources in maritime zones to which states are legally entitled, within the geographic and substantive limits set by international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

³⁰ "Outcomes of the COP26 Meeting" Department of Finance. November 19, 2021. <https://climate.gov.ph/public/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Outcomes%20of%20the%20COP26%20Meeting.pdf>



The Philippines believes that the 1982 UNCLOS, and its authoritative interpretation and application in the final and binding 2016 South China Sea Arbitration Award, provide a clear framework toward a just, fair, and win-win solution for all maritime disputes. The Philippines appreciates expressions of support from other countries for the 2016 Arbitration Award.

The Philippines adheres to ASEAN Centrality and makes use of ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms to peacefully manage the territorial and maritime disputes in the South China Sea. It calls on all parties to faithfully comply with their commitments to uphold international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, enhance mutual trust and confidence, observe non-militarization, exercise self-restraint, and avoid unilateral actions that could increase tensions or further complicate the situation.

Among ASEAN Member States and China, the Philippines urges all parties to fully and effectively implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. The Philippines also underscores the urgency and importance of the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, without prejudice to the legitimate rights of all stakeholders in the South China Sea.

As Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations for 2018–2021, the Philippines worked closely with ASEAN Member States and China to ensure that the COC negotiations moved forward amid the challenges and setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Philippines thus takes pride in the progress made during its coordinatorship, including the completion of the first reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text (SDNT) and the commencement of the second reading. The Philippines welcomes the provisional agreement on the Preamble section and the progress on the Objectives section under the General Provisions of the SDNT. The Philippines commits to work closely with Myanmar as the Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations for 2021–2024 to ensure continued progress in the COC negotiations.

In addition, the Philippines reiterates the importance of promoting and maintaining an environment conducive to the COC negotiations. Actions that coerce, intimidate, provoke, escalate tensions, undermine mutual trust and confidence, and violate state sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction guaranteed by international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS, impede the progress and momentum of the COC negotiations and threaten its success. The Philippines thus encourages all parties to continue exploring possible avenues for practical maritime cooperation in accordance with the 2002 DOC, including measures to reduce tensions, lower the risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculation, and enhance mutual trust and confidence.

The Philippines hopes that substantive regional cooperation will also emanate from the 2017 Declaration for a Decade of Coastal and Marine Environment Protection in the South China Sea (2017–2027), which affirms the commitment of ASEAN Member States and China to preserve and sustainably manage coastal and marine ecosystems in the South China Sea.

While engaging with ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms, the Philippines also turns to direct talks with the other claimant states in the South China Sea to discuss regional developments and issues therein, maritime security cooperation, among other concerns. With China, the Philippines makes use of the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism on the South China Sea (BCM). Established in 2017, the BCM aims to enhance mutual trust and confidence by providing a forum for both countries to hold constructive dialogue on issues of mutual concern in the South China Sea and explore possible avenues for practical maritime cooperation on political-security issues, fisheries management, and marine environmental protection and marine scientific research. Following the suspension of BCM meetings in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Philippines welcomed the conduct of the 6th BCM on 22 May 2021. The Philippines also looks forward to progress in the negotiations on joint oil and gas exploration and exploitation in the South China Sea pursuant to the 2018 Philippines-China Memorandum of Understanding on Oil and Gas Development and in accordance with the 1982 UNCLOS.

With Vietnam, the Philippines make use of the Philippines-Vietnam Joint Permanent Working Group on Maritime and Ocean Concerns (JPWG-MOC) under the Philippines-Vietnam Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation. At the 9th Meeting of the JPWG-MOC in November 2021, the Philippines and Vietnam agreed to enhance scientific cooperation and revive the Joint Oceanographic and Marine Scientific Research Expedition in the South China Sea (JOMSRE-SCS), which was last held in 2007. The revival of JOMSRE-SCS aligns with the DOC's aspirations and demonstrates both countries' desire and commitment to explore and actually undertake practical maritime cooperation in the South China Sea.

The Philippines also recognizes that countries outside the region have legitimate rights in the South China Sea as enshrined in international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS. In relations with external partners, the Philippines emphasizes adherence to the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, which promotes inclusiveness, openness, consensus-building, and respect for international law and preserves the centrality of ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms in cooperative initiatives in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.



The Philippines also engages with external partners through the convening of a Maritime Dialogue, which serves as a mechanism for regular exchange of views and coordination on maritime issues as a vital aspect of bilateral relations, and discussion on maritime areas of cooperation including on security, fisheries, environment, and law enforcement. The Philippines and Japan held their 4th Maritime Dialogue in October 2021. The inaugural Dialogue between the Philippines and Australia was launched in June 2021, and between the Philippines and the United States in March 2022. The expansion of these bilateral engagements is also being considered as the Philippines deepens its maritime cooperation with other countries.

Beyond the South China Sea disputes, the Philippines is fully committed to peacefully resolving its maritime disputes with other neighbors. In 2019, the Philippines completed the ratification of its exclusive economic zone boundary agreement with Indonesia in the Sulawesi Sea and the Philippine Sea. The treaty entered into force on 01 August 2019. The Philippines considers this maritime boundary delimitation agreement with Indonesia to be a valuable example of peaceful and rules-based dispute settlement in accordance with the 1982 UNCLOS. The Philippines and Indonesia have also convened two meetings in November 2021 and March 2022 to prepare for the First Special Meeting of the Joint Permanent Working Group on Maritime and Ocean Concerns (JPWG-MOC) on the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf Boundary. Both countries agreed on the Principles and Guidelines of the continental shelf boundary delimitation during these preparatory meetings and look forward to the convening of the First Special Meeting in 2022.

In March 2022, after the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, the Philippines also finally revived talks with Palau in preparation for the delimitation of their overlapping exclusive economic zones.

In the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas, the Philippines takes pride in the state of its cooperation with Indonesia and Malaysia under the 2016 Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA), which establishes a framework for coordinated maritime and air patrols among the three countries. Since the launching of patrols in 2017, there has been a significant reduction in abductions of shipping crews in the tri-border area, and in 2021, no incident of kidnapping for ransom was reported. The Philippines welcomes the agreement with Indonesia and Malaysia in March 2022 to expand the TCA. The Philippines is confident that the TCA will continue to be expanded to ensure the effective combating of piracy, armed robbery at sea, and other crimes at sea in the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas.

To manage various maritime security threats in the Indo-Pacific region, the Philippines supports ASEAN-led maritime security fora, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ARF-ISM on MS), the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF), the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM),

and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus). The Philippines recognizes that cooperation through these fora provides the best path to realize the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

The Philippines advocates greater cooperation among regional coast guards and maritime law enforcement agencies. In 2018, the Philippines hosted the 2nd Experts' Group Meeting on the Establishment of an ASEAN Coast Guards Forum (ACGF). The Philippines hopes for further discussions to explore the feasibility of establishing an ACGF. The Philippines also welcomes parallel efforts at the ARF, guided by the 2016 ARF Statement on Enhancing Cooperation among Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies.

The Philippines promotes regional efforts to protect the marine environment and sustainably manage fishing activities. The Philippines acknowledges the role of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), which it hosts in Los Baños, Laguna, in facilitating collaboration among ASEAN Member States on biodiversity conservation, such as through the ASEAN Heritage Parks Program. The Philippines also recognizes the roles of the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI), the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) in enhancing regional cooperation on sustainable marine economic development and marine environmental protection.

f. Security of Information and Communications Technology

Recognizing the vulnerabilities faced by the country in the digital domain, the Philippine government is strengthening its ICT infrastructure and capacity to address the security risks posed by the rapidly evolving nature of ICT.

The year 2022 marks the implementation of the Department of Information and Communication Technology's (DICT) National Cybersecurity Plan 2022 which serves as the roadmap in securing ICT infrastructure operations in the country. This plan underscores the development of a comprehensive National Cybersecurity Strategy Framework to institutionalize and adopt globally recognized standards. This initiative will provide the government with systematic safeguarding of mission-critical and non-critical infrastructure against threats and attacks.

The Framework centers on establishing a trusted and resilient ICT infrastructure anchored on the following phases: making critical information infrastructure trusted and secure, making government information environment secure, making businesses secure, and making individuals aware and secure.



Due to challenges arising from budgetary concerns and resource generation, the private sector has been assisting the government in providing adequate technical expertise and fiscal resources. This private sector awareness has sparked the emergence of an industry-led public-private partnership (PPP).³¹

The government has also established the Cybersecurity Management System (CMS) Project and the National Cyber Intelligence Web Monitoring (NCIWM). The CMS is the country's first-ever cyber resiliency initiative—a unified national platform for intelligence-sharing with which the DICT and its cybersecurity partners from the private sector are able to assist government agencies with cybersecurity threats, attacks, and other issues. Meanwhile, the NCIWM is a tool which can provide real-time analysis of web attacks on government websites and other domain names added to the system.

The Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training Program is another initiative introduced by the government. It is a capacity-building initiative to train government ICT personnel on information security. It is also an effort to establish and promote emergency response in the country.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines also initiated several steps to strengthen its cyber defense. The AFP Cybersecurity Strategic Plan (CSP) was established to enhance the organization's cybersecurity capabilities. AFP also organizes the Cyber Security Summit which aims to educate and raise the awareness of the Armed Forces on the latest trends in cybersecurity. On a similar note, the Philippine Air Force (PAF) and PLDT, the Philippines' largest telecommunications company, have launched a cybersecurity partnership, with PLDT's Cyber Security Operations Group helping PAF improve its cybersecurity capabilities.

At the regional level, the Philippines is committed to further contribute to addressing cyberspace risks and vulnerabilities by actively participating in the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus Experts' Working Group on Cyber Security and the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC). It supports efforts at strengthening capacity-building initiatives and other relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms in cybersecurity such as the ARF-Inter Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of ICTs and the ASEAN Digital Ministers Meeting (ADGMIN). It also welcomes and supports the ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy (2021–2025), which builds on the past 2017-2020 Strategy to identify initiatives in

1. Advancing Cyber Readiness Cooperation;
2. Strengthening Regional Cyber Policy Coordination;
3. Enhancing Trust in Cyberspace;
4. Regional Capacity-Building;
5. International Cooperation for an updated roadmap to build a safe and secure cyberspace in the ASEAN region.

³¹ Mark Manantan, "The promise of public-private cybersecurity partnerships in the Philippines," *EastAsiaForum*, last revised October 2020, <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2020/10/21/the-promise-of-public-private-cybersecurity-partnerships-in-the-philippines/>

2. Role of the ASEAN Regional Forum

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was founded in 1994 with the primary mandate of alleviating the strategic uncertainties emanating from a post-Cold War security environment by providing an avenue to achieve peace through dialogue and mutual trust. Since then, new security challenges have emerged, and the continuous shifts and turns in the regional and international environment, have many policymakers and academics questioning the relevance and effectiveness of the ARF.

While it is acknowledged that security issues persist in the Indo-Pacific region, it is undeniable that the ARF has played a significant role in norms-building and in the facilitation of practical interstate cooperation towards maintaining regional stability and security. It has also become an important platform that facilitates dialogue on issues of common interest. Apart from traditional security issues such as maritime security and non-proliferation and disarmament, it is worth noting that the ARF has also evolved to include in its discussion non-traditional security concerns such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, transnational crime and drug trafficking, and maritime environmental protection.

The expansion of activities monitored and discussed in the ARF highlights the increasing receptiveness of states to work together for the common good. Certainly, states have more to gain with a peaceful and stable environment than one fraught with unresolved conflicts, brewing tensions, and miscalculations. Hence, the Philippines will continue to play an active role in the endeavors of the ARF as a platform for confidence-building and preventive diplomacy. The country remains committed to work with ARF partners towards strengthening existing institutional mechanisms for crisis management and in pursuing a multi-track diplomacy in a multi-layered regional security architecture.

Likewise, the Philippines supports the involvement of Track 2 and 1.5 initiatives of various think-tanks and academic institutions through timely studies and recommendations on issues that have foreign policy implications, including conflict analyses and dispute resolution mechanisms. Initiatives that aim to increase meaningful participation of women, youth, and non-governmental actors in promoting peace and security in the region are also welcome.

The regional security architecture will continue to evolve. Factors such as the varying interests among states, domestic problems, and even the COVID-19, all prove that states will face more complicated security challenges in the years to come. Against this backdrop, it is necessary that ARF members foster greater confidence, unity, and closer collaboration among each other.



Equally crucial on the part of ASEAN, is the need to assert the principle of ASEAN Centrality within the ARF. ASEAN must be able to balance the interests of a variety of external partners and ensure that outcomes do not favor only a few, otherwise the institution will lose its relevance.

Lastly, in order to remain relevant, the ARF should move beyond dialogue, commitments, and written declarations. It must move towards its main goal of developing preventive diplomacy (PD) mechanisms and conflict resolution. Its strength will rely on whether it can deliver tangible results through the development of substantial measures on areas of common concerns for both traditional and non-traditional issues.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Today, this region and the world are faced with multiple and multi-faceted challenges. Some of them are existential, such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, while others challenge the existing international order by threatening the rules-based system. Increased geopolitical tensions are taking toll on the on-going recovery efforts, thereby raising the risks of economic downturn and social unrest.

At this critical juncture, it is important to reaffirm the collective commitment of ARF participants to peace and stability for the region's continued development and prosperity. In this regard, harnessing the full potential of the ARF as a platform for dialogue on security issues will be important to address the challenges facing the region, and build confidence among states so as to create an environment that is conducive to peace and prosperity. As a founding member, the Republic of Korea (ROK) has been a dedicated participant in the ARF and will continue to contribute to strengthening the ARF's role in facilitating peace and stability in the region.

a. Korean Peninsula

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) launched thirty-one ballistic missiles in the first half of 2022, including multiple launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles. These escalatory ballistic missile launches are not only a clear violation and flagrant disregard of UN Security Council resolutions but also a grave threat to the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula as well as to those of the entire region and beyond.

It is particularly concerning that the DPRK is revealing its intention to further accelerate the advancement of its nuclear and missile program. It seems that the DPRK is lowering the bar for potential nuclear use and is becoming increasingly bold with its nuclear threats. The DPRK leader delivered a speech at the military parade on April 25 in which he emphasized that the DPRK "will continue to take measures for further developing nuclear forces...at the fastest possible speed." He also said that their nukes "can never be confined to the single mission of war deterrent" and that "if any forces try to violate the fundamental interests...[the DPRK's] nuclear force will have to decisively accomplish its unexpected second mission."

In April, Pyongyang announced that it successfully carried out the test-fire of "the new type of tactical guided weapon" which was of "great significance in drastically improving the firepower of the frontline long-range artillery units and enhancing the efficiency in the operation of tactical nukes of the DPRK and diversification of their firepower missions."

The international community's united and firm response is crucial to curbing the DPRK's incessant destabilizing activities, and the full implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions should be one of the priorities. It is also essential to continue sending out a clear message that the international community will not tolerate the DPRK's blatant provocations. In this regard, it is deeply regretful that the Security Council failed to adopt a resolution on May 26 despite the overwhelming support from its members.



The ROK is fully ready to respond to any further provocations by the DPRK, and the ROK-US combined defense posture remains to be rock solid. President Yoon Suk Yeol had a meeting with US President Joseph R. Biden in Seoul on May 21, 2022, which marked the earliest meeting in a ROK President's term in office with the President of the US. They reiterated their common goal of the complete denuclearization of the DPRK and agreed to further strengthen their airtight coordination to this end.

The two presidents also emphasized that the path to dialogue remains open toward peaceful and diplomatic resolution with the DPRK and called on the DPRK to return to the negotiating table. In his inaugural address on May 10, President Yoon Suk Yeol declared that the ROK government was ready to work with the international community to present an audacious plan that would drastically improve the DPRK's economy and the lives of its people if the DPRK embarked on a substantive denuclearization process. It is a vision to normalize inter-Korean relationship through the plan aimed at a denuclearized and prosperous Korean Peninsula. President Yoon further elaborated on this idea in his State of the Nation speech before the National Assembly on May 16. He said that he would work for a sustainable peace that is supported by a denuclearization process of the DPRK and confidence building between the two Koreas.

The human rights and humanitarian situation in the DPRK remains deeply concerning. It is the most vulnerable that are bearing the brunt of the recent COVID-19 outbreak in the DPRK. The ROK government has already conveyed its willingness to provide assistance to the DPRK in order to combat the virus, together with the international community, irrespective of political considerations. We hope that the DPRK will respond positively to the international community's offer of assistance.

b. ROK's Vision for Regional Cooperation

For over three decades, the ROK has been a steadfast partner of ASEAN and active participant of ASEAN-led mechanisms. The ROK takes part in various ASEAN platforms including the ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit as well as the ARF to promote peace and growth through dialogue and a habit of cooperation among countries the region. In this regard, the ROK is a strong supporter of ASEAN Centrality and a rules-based multilateral order in this region.

Also, recognizing the effectiveness of sub-regional approach in addressing development gaps, the ROK has been strengthening sub-regional cooperation with ASEAN Member States. In the Mekong sub-region, the ROK focuses on cooperation in areas such as human resources development, infrastructure, and environment with a view to promoting the region's sustainable economic and social development. Last year, the ROK also established partnership with the BIMP-EAGA to contribute to promoting inclusive and balanced growth in the maritime sub-region.

ROK's active engagement in this region, and its initiative for collective action was particularly significant during COVID-19. In April 2020, the ROK took initiative in convening the Special ASEAN+3 Summit on COVID-19. Simultaneously, in order to help contain the spread of the virus in the region, the ROK worked closely with ASEAN Member States in sharing test kits

and medical supplies and equipment. The ROK was also the first dialogue partner to contribute to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund.

The new ROK government, which came into office in May 2022, set out its foreign policy vision of the ROK as a “global pivotal state”. Under this vision, the ROK will embrace a greater role in advancing freedom, peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. Specifically, the ROK aims to build greater solidarity with ASEAN based on a mutually beneficial partnership. In this process, the ROK will remain inclusive.

The ROK also seeks to generate synergy by strengthening cooperation and coordination among the policies and initiatives of ASEAN and dialogue partners. Over the years, many countries in the region have stepped up engagement with the Indo-Pacific region under various strategies, policies and initiatives. Sharing common values of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, and respect for international norms, coordination among these strategies, policies and initiatives is expected to generate synergy in safeguarding a rules-based order and promoting greater stability.

Consequently, the ROK has been committed to working together with ARF partners in implementing such initiatives. In addition to harmonizing ROK’s policy on ASEAN with ASEAN’s major initiatives and plans, including the AOIP and ACRF, the ROK held policy dialogues with US, Australia, and the EU to explore areas of collaboration to promote public health, connectivity, maritime security, and digital transformation among others in the Indo-Pacific region.

II. National Security and Defense Policy

a. Overview of the ROK’s National Security and Defense Policy

The ROK government established its “National Security Strategy (2022-2026)” and has been faithfully implementing it to build a peaceful and prosperous Korean Peninsula. While maintaining a robust security posture, the ROK government is working hard to realize a denuclearized and peaceful Korean Peninsula.

Under the goal of “Competent Security, Robust Defense,” the ROK has been striving to build an advanced, elite, and strong military force by utilizing cutting-edge technology. The ROK is also working on fostering an advanced military culture in order to build a trustworthy military that stands by the people.

b. Data Contribution to the ARF Arms Register (The ROK’s defence expenditure in 2021)

- Total defence expenditure : KRW 52,840 billion
- Defence expenditure as a percentage of the GDP : 2.57%
- Defence expenditure per capita : KRW 0.001 billion

c. National Contribution to Regional Security

The ROK has been working with ARF participants both bilaterally and multilaterally to address ongoing and emerging security threats in the region. The ROK has taken the initiative to



address disarmament, non-proliferation, and ICT security issues; actively engage in maritime security and disaster management issues; and doubled its efforts to fight against terrorism and transnational crimes.

III. Counter-terrorism

Terrorism and violent extremism continue to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. The threat of terrorism is continuously spreading to all corners of the world, particularly so in Asia as ISIS is trying to expand its influence in the region. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the drivers of violent extremism conducive to terrorism. With the global increase in the use of the Internet and social media during the pandemic, terrorists and violent extremists are stepping up their attempts to spread violent extremism content through online platforms. The ROK stands firm by its position that terrorism should be eradicated and not be tolerated in any form and has been doubling its efforts to combat terrorism at the national, regional, and global levels.

While rigorously countering imminent terrorist threats, the ROK has been emphasizing the importance of preventing and countering violent extremism. The ROK government is working closely with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) to help countries prone to violent extremism build capacity. Specifically, the ROK government is funding UNOCT's programs for preventing violent extremism such as the Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events and the Promotion of Sport and its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism. In addition to participating in the high-level meetings and expert group meetings on preventing violent extremism through sports in 2020, the ROK supported the creation of an e-platform to increase knowledge sharing and promote remote capacity-building training as part of the global programme.

The ROK government is also working with UNOCT to help countries strengthen their border security and increase their capacity for countering and preventing terrorism through its joint project with the UN Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCCT), namely the Initiative to Expand the UNCCT Border Security and Management Good Practices in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The ROK government is also actively participating in the global fight against terrorist financing. The ROK has worked together with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to prevent illegal financial transactions and encourage member states to implement relevant policies. The ROK attended the FATF Plenary Meeting held in February, June, and October 2021. The FATF's Mutual Evaluation Report published in April 2020 recognized that the ROK had improved its legal framework since its last evaluation, including its terrorist financing offenses and confiscation regime. Along with its international contribution, the ROK faithfully implemented UN Security Council resolutions 1267, 1988, 1989, and 2253 to prevent terrorist-related financial flows into domestic institutions.

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

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery continue to pose grave challenges to the global community, and the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile



programs remain a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. To counter such circumstances, the ROK will continue to faithfully implement relevant UN Security Council Resolutions until the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the DPRK has been achieved.

The ROK remains firmly committed to the full implementation of the Non-Proliferation of the Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT), which has been the cornerstone of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. The ROK will play an active role in producing successful outcomes for maintaining and further strengthening of the NPT regime at the 10th NPT Review Conference, which will be held in August this year. The ROK has actively participated in the 2022 NPT review process and will continue to work with other states parties for balanced progress across all of its three pillars. In order to facilitate progress in nuclear disarmament, the ROK is also actively participating in the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament Initiative, the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, and the Stockholm Initiative. The ROK will closely cooperate with its partners to achieve concrete deliverables. In addition, the ROK will continue to seek an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and call for an immediate start of the negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

In response to the growing risk of WMD terrorism, the ROK is working toward a full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540. As preventing WMDs and related materials from falling into the hands of terrorists is vital, the ROK has been making efforts to implement UNSCR 1540 effectively. Such efforts include chairing the 1540 committee in the 2013-2014 term, hosting industrial outreach conferences in September 2016 and September 2018, and providing financial assistance for the UNSCR 1540 online education program in 2018 and 2019 and for the project on applying emerging technologies to help strengthen UNSCR 1540 implementation in 2022.

As one of the original states parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the ROK has actively participated in the international efforts to support and strengthen the regime and to prevent any use of chemical weapons. The ROK was the first state party to provide voluntary contributions for the Chem-Tech project in 2017 and has continued to make financial contributions on an annual basis since then to help the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to fulfill its mission. The ROK has also been hosting the Seoul Workshop on the Peaceful Development and Use of Chemistry annually together with the OPCW to facilitate regional cooperation in chemical safety and security since 2012. Although the workshop was held online in 2021 due to the pandemic, the ROK looks forward to having a face-to-face workshop in 2022. The ROK has also contributed to reinforcing the Biological Weapons Convention since its ratification.

Moreover, fast-paced technological advancements in new domains, such as autonomous weapons and outer space, are becoming a new sphere of strategic competition, posing severe challenges to the current international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In response to these challenges, the ROK has played an active role in a number of consultative bodies on specific disarmament issues, such as the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and the Group of Governmental Experts on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, to contribute to setting international norms in these areas. Also, the ROK fully supports the UN General Assembly First Committee's resolutions on "reducing space threats



through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours” (A/RES/75/36, A/RES/76/231) and will constructively engage in relevant fora including the UN Open-ended Working Group.

As a reliable and long-standing supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the ROK imposes strict control over illicit transfers and diversion of conventional arms while respecting the principles of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Drawing on its advanced national control system and best practices, the ROK has been serving as the chair of the ATT Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation since 2019. The ROK reaffirms its commitment to establishing the highest possible common standards for arms transfers.

The ROK has relentlessly sought ways to strengthen the global counter-proliferation regime and actively participated in relevant international efforts such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The ROK has been attending the annual PSI Operational Experts Group meetings and Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation (APER) exercises as part of such efforts. In October 2021, the ROK participated in the APER exercise that was hosted by Singapore, which was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and contributed to enhancing the overall counter-proliferation capacity of the region. The ROK will continue to reach out to its PSI partners in the region to strengthen global counter-proliferation efforts.

Since 2002, the ROK and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs have co-hosted the annual ROK-UN Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues. The 20th conference, which was held in November 2021, brought together disarmament and non-proliferation experts from governments, international organizations, academia, and industry. Participants had an intensive discussion on the past and future of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation diplomacy, the past fifty-one years of the NPT regime and the way forward, and regional issues.

The ROK will continue to seek ways to contribute constructively to the international community’s discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. In December 2021, a resolution titled “Youth, Disarmament, and Non-Proliferation” was adopted at the 76th session of the UN General Assembly, making it the second ROK-led resolution to be adopted. Also, the ROK hosted the 2021 Youth Forum on Disarmament and Non-proliferation with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in June 2021 to mark the 30th anniversary of the ROK’s UN membership. In the forum, twenty-five young people from twenty-two different countries discussed ways to enhance international disarmament and non-proliferation, create synergy between the UN Sustainable Development Goals, new and emerging technologies, and gender issues. As a result of the two-day discussion, the participants adopted the Seoul Youth Declaration for Disarmament and Non-proliferation, which contains recommendations for strengthening the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The ROK will explore ways to further increase youth engagement in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation.

b. Transnational Crime

The ROK has been stepping up its efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers pursuant to its Criminal Act and, by doing so, to identify and protect victims of human trafficking. The ROK amended its Criminal Act in 2013 to introduce a new provision on trafficking as part of its efforts to meet the standards of the United Nations Convention against Transnational

Organized Crime (UNTOC). In 2015, the ROK ratified UNTOC and the Protocols thereto. In August 2016, the ROK's National Human Rights Commission developed the Indicators for the Identification and Protection of Trafficking in Persons, which were distributed to relevant government branches and recommended for use as guidelines for identifying and protecting victims. The ROK enacted the Act on the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons and Victim Protection in March 2021, which requires establishing government-wide measures to prevent trafficking in persons and enhance support for the victims.

Furthermore, the ROK is putting in a special effort to prevent human trafficking and violation of human rights by workers in the marine and fishing industry. For instance, the ROK conducts annual crackdowns to protect the victims of human trafficking and prevent humanitarian crimes. In 2022, the ROK is planning a special crackdown on human rights violations such as labor exploitation, inducement, and human trafficking targeting workers in the marine and fishing industry.

In 2019, the ROK participated as a co-sponsor in the EAS Leaders' Statement on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime, which was adopted at the 14th East Asia Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand. Through the statement, the ROK reaffirmed its commitment to advancing applicable international instruments such as UNTOC, developing effective policies, and taking regulatory and operational responses to transnational crimes. In 2020, the ROK also participated in the Conference of the Parties to UNTOC held to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of UNTOC and the Protocols thereto.

To further strengthen efforts to combat transnational crimes, and in line with the ROK's efforts to fully implement UN Security Council resolutions 2250, 2419, and 2535 on the advancement of the youth, peace, and security agenda, the ROK co-sponsored the Joint Statement to Promote the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, which was adopted at the 28th ARF Foreign Minister's Meeting. Through these efforts and more, the ROK will contribute to preventing the youth from being victims of violence and empowering them so that they can become a key partner in the cycle of peace.

c. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

The ROK has actively responded to humanitarian needs caused by emergency disasters such as earthquakes, typhoons, infectious diseases, and protracted humanitarian crises in conflict areas such as Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. To alleviate the suffering of the affected people and to minimize damage from disasters, the ROK government provided approximately 190 million US dollars in humanitarian assistance in 2021.

In response to unexpected disasters, which are growing in size and frequency due to factors such as climate change, the ROK government provided approximately 18 million US dollars to help relieve the damage caused by unexpected disasters—such as the flooding in Timor-Leste, the volcanic eruption in DR Congo, and the earthquake in Haiti—and to provide COVID-19-related assistance to twenty-five countries. In addition, regarding protracted humanitarian crises such as those in Yemen and Syria, the ROK provided about seventy-two million US dollars to improve the humanitarian situation in these countries.



Given that the Asia-Pacific is a disaster-prone region, the ROK is playing a constructive role in strengthening regional cooperation in disaster management and relief. While serving as co-chair of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief along with Thailand in 2018, the ROK contributed to drafting the ARF Work Plan for Disaster Relief 2018-2020. As a follow-up to the work plan, the ROK supported countries such as Bangladesh, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam to develop disaster risk reduction strategies in cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The ROK is also seeking to share business models, best practices, and localized approaches to raise awareness on potential disaster risks and to take further steps in establishing contingency measures at the local and national levels. In 2021, the ROK further strengthened cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) by providing unearmarked funding in a multi-year format in order to support UNDRR's core mandates stated in its Work Programme 2020-2021 and its new Strategic Framework 2022-2025.

Moreover, the ROK government is supporting the capacity building of ASEAN member states in disaster management through the ASEAN-ROK Cooperation Fund. Specifically, the ROK has been carrying out the Operationalizing the ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) project with the ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management since 2020 to create a regionally recognized certification scheme for disaster management professionals and ensure and promote higher standards and quality in managing disasters within the region. The ASCEND project will benefit the general public of the ASEAN region by improving the quality of disaster management and emergency response, thereby contributing to reducing the damage caused by disasters and improving the resilience of communities.

The ROK will continue its efforts to address the gap between growing humanitarian needs and available resources and to ensure that the resources efficiently reach those in the greatest need.

d. Maritime Security

Maritime security covers a wide range of issues. One of the most critical of those issues is countering and preventing piracy and armed robbery against ships. To help address this problem, the ROK has actively participated in regional maritime security forums such as the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).

The ROK became a party to ReCAAP in 2006 and has been closely cooperating with the ReCAAP Information Sharing Center by sending Korean staff to the center since 2007. Moreover, the ROK has made voluntary financial contributions to ReCAAP to support regional capacity building. The ROK provided approximately 90,000 US dollars annually from 2008 to 2012 and, from 2013 onwards, the ROK's annual contribution has reached 130,000 US dollars—nearly a fifty percent increase—to broaden its role and scope in combating piracy in Asia.

In order to take active part in the global efforts against piracy, the ROK has deployed the Cheonghae (which means “pure sea” in Korean) Anti-Piracy Unit to the high seas off the coast of



Somalia since 2009. The Cheonghae Unit has been conducting convoy missions as part of the Combined Task Force under the command of the Combined Maritime Forces. The Cheonghae Unit has also been participating in the European Union Naval Force's Operation Atalanta since February 2017 to protect the vessels of the African Union Mission, the World Food Programme, and others.

Since 2009, the ROK has played an important role in the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. Specifically, the ROK made financial contributions to the group to help strengthen the capacity of coastal states in countering piracy. Until the group announced its plan to close the trust fund by 2021, the ROK had contributed a total of 1.7 million US dollars to the fund.

Moreover, the ROK made financial contributions totaling 800,000 US dollars to the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Djibouti Code of Conduct Trust Fund to strengthen the judicial capacity of Somalia and its neighboring countries in tackling piracy from 2009 to 2017. The ROK also provided 100,000 US dollars annually to the IMO West and Central Africa Maritime Security Trust Fund from 2018 to 2020 and, in light of the recent rise in piracy attacks near West Africa, 200,000 US dollars in 2021. The ROK plans to host training programs together with the IMO for maritime security officers from the Gulf of Guinea countries and provide equipment to facilitate communication between the region's maritime operations centers.

e. Cybersecurity

Information and communications technology (ICT) provides immense opportunities for social and economic development. However, the recent increase in the number of malicious cyber activities and the level of sophistication of such activities pose significant challenges to international peace and security.

In order to address these growing threats, the ROK launched the National Cybersecurity Strategy in April 2019. The strategy sets out ROK's vision and goals in cybersecurity and outlines the strategic tasks at individual, industry, and government levels.

Given the transnational nature of cyber-attacks and threats, strong partnerships at the bilateral, regional, and international level are key to protecting cyberspace from malicious cyber activities. The ROK remains committed to promoting mutual understanding and working together to address cyber security challenges.

In 2021, the ROK continued to engage actively in a number of bilateral and trilateral cyber consultations. As many meetings were held virtually due to the pandemic, the ROK had cyber policy consultations with the Netherlands and Australia online.

The ROK has also been an active and constructive member of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ISM on ICTs Security) and the ARF Open Ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures. The ROK is co-chairing the ISM on ICTs Security in 2021-2023 along with Indonesia, Australia, and Russia. The ROK welcomes the new confidence building measures proposed and adopted within the ARF context and stands committed to implementing and developing these measures in cooperation with other ARF participants.



The ROK expects that the confidence building measures adopted at the recent ISM on ICTs Security will produce a synergy effect with the ROK-led capacity building projects currently underway in the ASEAN region, such as the capacity building program on cybercrime and cybersecurity in Indonesia and Nepal and the regional education and training program of the Asia-Pacific Information Security Center. The ROK is also participating in other capacity-building projects led by the ASEAN-Singapore Cyber Security Center of Excellence and the Asia-Pacific Cybercrime Capacity Building Hub.

Furthermore, recognizing the importance of sharing policies and experiences on cyber confidence building measures between Asia and Europe, the ROK and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe co-hosted the Third Inter-Regional Conference on Cyber/ ICT Security in June 2021 in a virtual format. In 2020, the ROK also hosted Inter-Regional Conference on the Impact of Emerging Technologies on International Security and Terrorism to discuss cybersecurity issues in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the international level, the ROK actively participated in the work of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security and contributed to producing a consensus-based final report. The ROK will continue to participate in OEWG II, which started in 2021.

4. Role of the ARF

a. Contributing to Advancing the ARF and Regional Security

As a founding member, the ROK is committed to realizing the ARF's vision of promoting confidence building measures, developing preventive diplomacy, and elaborating approaches to conflicts in the region. The ROK actively participated in the ARF's various confidence building measures and preventive diplomacy activities during the inter-sessional year of 2021-2022, which include the Inter-Sessional Support Group Meeting, Inter-Sessional Meetings, and the Defense Officials' Dialogue, along with other workshops and seminars.

In particular, the ROK co-chaired the Fourth ARF ISM on ICTs Security on May 13, 2022 and contributed to promoting information sharing and confidence building. The ROK government will deepen its engagement in the ARF's work and will continue to co-chair the ARF ISM on ICTs Security in 2022-2023.

As the world is becoming more digitally connected, the pace of which has been further accelerated by the pandemic, cyber threats have also become more varied and numerous. In this context, the ROK has proposed to host a workshop to train cyber security professionals in order to help narrow the digital gap within the region and contribute to building a safer cyber security environment.

Furthermore, the ROK will co-chair the 16th Meeting of the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) for 2022-2023 with Brunei Darussalam. The ROK hope this 16th meeting will serve as an opportunity to vitalize the ARF's track II activities and exchange views on how to strengthen the ARF mechanism.

The ROK looks forward to working closely with ARF participants in securing peace and stability and building confidence in various fields such as counter terrorism, maritime security, transnational crime, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and other security related areas.

b. Future of the ARF

Since its establishment in 1994, the ARF has played an essential role in promoting regional peace and stability as a unique intergovernmental forum for multilateral security cooperation. Even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the ARF has served as an effective platform for exchanging views on common security threats, identifying common ground as well as difference for confidence-building among countries in the region.

Moreover, today's dynamic security landscape in the region requires the ARF to harness its strengths to the fullest. Also, the growing complexity of the security environment has increased the importance of working in concert with other regional mechanisms, such as the ADMM+ and the East Asia Summit.

It is also essential that ARF participants strive to make the forum more efficient and effective. In addition to candid and open exchange of views and active participation of ARF participants, the voices of the private sector and the youth, who are also important stakeholders in the future of this region, need to be heard as well.

The ROK will continue to contribute to making the ARF a platform for enriching and expanding our understanding of security and bringing views together to strengthen peace in the region.



I. Overview of the regional security environment

The Indo-Pacific region is central to New Zealand's security and economic well-being. The region faces a number of serious challenges. New Zealand meaningfully engages with the regional security architecture; on the health and societal impacts of COVID-19; the challenges of an economic recovery from the pandemic in a constrained global economy, including the reinstatement of regional connectivity; and managing key regional security issues.

New Zealand values our participation in ASEAN-led architecture, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). These channels provide us the means to coordinate our efforts and work collectively on initiatives that will support a broad-based recovery from the crisis and a more stable, prosperous and resilient Indo-Pacific region.

New Zealand also considers that regional bodies such as the ARF, EAS, and ADMM-Plus have an important role to play in promoting the principles, rules and norms that New Zealand values in the Indo-Pacific region, such as openness and inclusivity, ASEAN centrality, transparency, freedom of navigation and overflight, adherence to international law, open markets, and respect for sovereignty.

In addition to promoting a strong rules-based system, close regional cooperation on security threats is increasingly important as the nature of threats continues to evolve. New Zealand is working to ensure that we – as a country and as a region – are equipped to deal with the emerging risks posed by the increased use of technology, potential security impacts of climate change and the diverse range of actors seeking to challenge global rules and norms.

vaccines. To contribute to this objective, New Zealand continues to support the ASEAN-led response in the region, including NZ\$1 million to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund. We have contributed NZ\$37 million towards the COVID-19 global efforts, focused on areas of on areas in ASEAN and Pacific most affected by the health and livelihoods impacts of COVID-19. We have provided over 2 million doses via COVAX for developing countries.

Challenges to the rules and norms that underpin our shared security and prosperity in the ASEAN Regional Forum have the potential to undermine all our efforts to date. We must continue to utilise the ASEAN Regional Forum for dialogue and cooperation to build confidence, to manage differences, and to ensure there are no misunderstandings leading to conflict.

In our view, key security issues affecting the ARF membership include the illegal and unprovoked invasion by an ARF member, Russia, of its neighbour Ukraine. This attack has serious implications for global peace, security and economic stability, including in our Indo-Pacific region. We call on President Putin's regime to act in a manner consistent with all its international obligations and responsibilities and end this war immediately. New Zealand will continue to stand with Ukraine, and work to uphold the rules-based international system that is critical to ongoing peace and security in our region.

Similarly, New Zealand strongly condemns the military coup in Myanmar. We continue to call for immediate cession of violence and a return to civilian rule. New Zealand supports the ASEAN's efforts of working to implement the Five-Point Consensus.

We remain seriously concerned about developments in the South China Sea. We have consistently called on all claimant states to cease actions that escalate tensions and to settle

disputes peacefully and in accordance with international law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of Sea as the constitution for the oceans. Prosperity and stability in the Indo-Pacific region depends on a secure maritime environment and the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes. All ARF members have an interest in avoiding miscalculations and the maintenance of the regime of maritime zones and the freedoms of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, in accordance with international law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Korean Peninsula remains one of the greatest long-term threats to regional security. We are concerned at the increased intensity of DPRK's ballistic missile tests, in contravention of UN Security Council Resolution and are deeply troubled by reports that the DPRK may be preparing for a nuclear test. It is critical that there is a strong, unified international response condemning the DPRK's actions if it conducts a nuclear test. New Zealand continues to engage actively with international efforts to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of North Korea, including through the full and effective implementation of sanctions in accordance with all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

In addition to responding to these specific geographical challenges, New Zealand remains committed to the work of the ASEAN Regional Forum in building resilience in cyber-security and the spread of misinformation and disinformation, and prioritising functional cooperation and preventive diplomacy in areas of counter-terrorism and trans-national crime, non-proliferation and disarmament, maritime security, and disaster relief. We are concerned at the increased attempts to disrupt and destabilise the international rules based order through the spread of mis- and dis-information.

The economic recovery from the pandemic provides us opportunities to shape, and build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable economies. New Zealand is strongly committed to an open, rules-based trading regime and considers that enhanced economic integration is one of the most effective means of ensuring longer term regional security and prosperity. New Zealand is committed to pursuing multilateral, plurilateral and bilateral trade agreements that support this goal. New Zealand also aims to strengthen the broader regional trade architecture to ensure it is resilient to future shocks. As the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Chair in 2021, New Zealand led and delivered on a progressive agenda to facilitate an inclusive and resilient economic recovery in the region.

New Zealand attaches considerable importance to the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which entered into force in 2010 and is currently undergoing upgrade negotiations to ensure it remains relevant and fit-for-purpose in an evolving global environment. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), signed by the ten ASEAN members plus Australia, China, Japan, Korea and New Zealand, covering 30% of global GDP, is the biggest trade agreement in the world. With its entry into force in January 2022, the rules and norms set by the RCEP will make trade simpler to navigate and provide greater confidence to businesses.

Several ASEAN members are also part of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which entered into force for New Zealand, Mexico, Singapore, Japan, Canada and Australia on 30 December 2018 and for Viet Nam on 14 January 2019. New Zealand is looking forward to Malaysia, Brunei, Chile and Peru ratifying the agreement as soon as their domestic processes have been completed. In addition to regional agreements, New Zealand has other bilateral FTAs or Closer Economic Partnerships with many other ARF members, including China, the Republic of Korea, Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei.



In addition to the immediate security threats, the impacts of climate change on human security, on secure supply chains, on access and servicing of critical infrastructure cannot be underestimated. Climate change is one of the greatest threats to the livelihoods, security, and well-being of peoples in the Indo-Pacific. The ARF membership does have a role to play in considering climate change issues in our Confidence-Building Measures and Preventative Diplomacy work plan of the ARF.

1. Overview of the regional security environment

The Indo-Pacific region is central to New Zealand's security and economic well-being. The region faces a number of serious challenges. New Zealand meaningfully engages with the regional security architecture; on the health and societal impacts of COVID-19; the challenges of an economic recovery from the pandemic in a constrained global economy, including the reinstatement of regional connectivity; and managing key regional security issues.

New Zealand values our participation in ASEAN-led architecture, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). These channels provide us the means to coordinate our efforts and work collectively on initiatives that will support a broad-based recovery from the crisis and a more stable, prosperous and resilient Indo-Pacific region.

New Zealand also considers that regional bodies such as the ARF, EAS, and ADMM-Plus have an important role to play in promoting the principles, rules and norms that New Zealand values in the Indo-Pacific region, such as openness and inclusivity, ASEAN centrality, transparency, freedom of navigation and overflight, adherence to international law, open markets, and respect for sovereignty.

In addition to promoting a strong rules-based system, close regional cooperation on security threats is increasingly important as the nature of threats continues to evolve. New Zealand is working to ensure that we – as a country and as a region – are equipped to deal with the emerging risks posed by the increased use of technology, potential security impacts of climate change and the diverse range of actors seeking to challenge global rules and norms.

It remains important to us that we work together to ensure fair and equitable access to vaccines. To contribute to this objective, New Zealand continues to support the ASEAN-led response in the region, including NZ\$1 million to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund. We have contributed NZ\$37 million towards the COVID-19 global efforts, focused on areas of on areas in ASEAN and Pacific most affected by the health and livelihoods impacts of COVID-19. We have provided over 2 million doses via COVAX for developing countries.

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2. New Zealand's security and defence policy

Overview of national security and defence policy

As a founding member of the United Nations, respect for international norms and law is fundamental to New Zealand's approach to promoting security, stability and peace. While geographically isolated, New Zealand is not distanced from the accelerating and intensifying impacts of geo-strategic competition and trans-national threats such as climate change, terrorism, arms proliferation, organised crime, cyber-attacks, and bio-security. Recognising this, New Zealand is highly committed to multilateral solutions to security threats and the promotion of effective international rules. New Zealand takes a multilayered approach to security that includes strong bilateral relationships, regional partnerships, and support for regional architecture and institutions. ASEAN-centric regional security architecture has an increasingly important role in bringing countries together and providing a forum for discussions. Our view is that these forums fulfil an important role promoting understanding, entrenching habits of dialogue and facilitating practical military-to-military cooperation.

New Zealand has a strong interest in fostering and maintaining a network of robust international relationships, which include:

- New Zealand's alliance with Australia;
- the Five Power Defence Arrangements (New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and the United Kingdom);



- the Five Eyes partnership (New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States);
- close bilateral ties with Pacific Island neighbours, including those for which New Zealand has constitutional responsibilities;
- close and growing bilateral ties with a number of Indo-Pacific partners from North Asia to South and Southeast Asia; and
- Pacific and Indo-Pacific regional security architecture such as the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM), the ARF and the ADMM Plus, in addition to the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process).

New Zealand defence policy settings are articulated in the Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018. This statement describes Defence's value to New Zealand in terms of its contributions to the community, the nation and the world, with emphasis on community and environmental resilience. It also provides perspective on the evolving strategic environment; specifying the priority for the Defence Force being able to operate in the South Pacific (to the same level as that for New Zealand's territory, the Southern Ocean and Antarctica); featuring a set of principles for Defence; and underscoring the importance of contributing to New Zealand's key security partnerships. The statement reaffirmed that the ADMM-Plus remains New Zealand's principal forum for multilateral defence engagement in Asia. The Statement has been supplemented by standalone assessments such as The Climate Crisis: Defence Readiness and Responsibilities. The Statement is supported by indicative planned investments as set out in the Defence Capability Plan 2019.

3. New Zealand's contribution to regional security

Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime

New Zealand remains firmly committed to countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism in all forms, and to combatting transnational organised crime. To prevent, detect, and respond to these threats, New Zealand is engaged at the multilateral, regional, sub-regional and bilateral levels, with a particular focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

To support achievement of New Zealand's global security priorities, including assisting with capacity building in neighbouring states, New Zealand has a number of specialised security funds, including dedicated Global and Pacific Security Funds. The specialised security funds assist New Zealand's achievement of its Plan of Action with ASEAN, particularly in areas of border control; legislation; law enforcement; policy; irregular migration; and prevention/counter radicalisation and countering the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. Ongoing collective effort is required to prevent their relocation to other conflict zones or effectively manage their return home through targeted rehabilitation and reintegration support.

In line with our commitment to reduce the risk of South East Asia being a target or source of terrorism we are sharpening our strategic focus, and plan to strengthen efforts to support partners to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks, to counter the root causes of violent extremism by building resilient communities, and help invigorate mechanisms that promote coherence and coordination of counter-terrorism policy and practice within governments and across the region.



Breaking down the silos that impede cooperation within governments and the barriers that hinder cooperation between governments is necessary to tackle these significant and complex transnational security threats. New Zealand seeks to work closely with our partners in the region to help achieve coherence in policy and practice, including ASEAN-centred initiatives such as those under the umbrella of the ASEAN Regional Forum.

New Zealand's co-chairing of the ARF workstream on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime along with Malaysia and the EU is indicative of the importance that we place on this regional mechanism, especially as a forum for advancing broader regional efforts to counter violent extremism online.

On a bilateral basis, capacity building in South East Asia is a significant focus of New Zealand's global counter-terrorism engagement. We have long-standing relationships with institutions in the region such as the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation and the South East Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (Malaysia).

Despite impacts of COVID-19, all courses scheduled for delivery by New Zealand Police during the 2021/22 financial year were delivered either virtually or with a return to in-person training, these included:

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) through Community Policing Course –delivered in person between 30 May – 10 June 2022 and focused on community engagement as a tool to prevent violent extremism. This New Zealand Police led course was delivered by two trainers through the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC).

- **Cyber Crime Investigation Skills course** – two courses were delivered either virtually or as a hybrid model, one from 15 – 26 November 2021 and one from 14 – 25 March 2022 with a fully in-person course being delivered from 18 - 29 July 2022. All Cyber Crime Investigation Skills course are delivered through JCLEC in partnership with the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to students from throughout Southeast Asia focused on addressing knowledge and skills gaps among those working in Cyber and Technology Enabled Crime (TEC) Investigations.
- New Zealand Police also contributed towards the virtual **Victoria University of Wellington STIK (Indonesian National Police Higher Education) Masters Course**, delivered in December 2021 to students from Indonesia National Police.
- **Transnational Organised Crime Skills course** - in February 2022 the New Zealand Police along with Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and New Zealand Customs delivered the Transnational Organised Crime course to the Indonesian National Police through the JCLEC with a view to expanding this to other ASEAN countries.
- **Transnational Organised Regional Cooperation Course** – between 20 June and 1 July 2022 the New Zealand Police along with Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and New Zealand Customs delivered the inaugural TNOC



Regional Cooperation course for ASEAN Countries at JCLEC (8 Countries, 15 organisations). The International TNOC Course focused on vulnerabilities in the maritime domain and was delivered at the strategic/management level.

- **Building Police Leadership Capacity – Women In Leadership** – between 20 – 24 June 2022 the New Zealand Police along with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the UK Government delivered the inaugural in-person Building Police Leadership Capacity – Women In Leadership Course to female leaders from across Asia through the JCLEC. This course is aimed at enhancing key leadership competencies ranging from change leadership, project management, EI (emotional intelligence) decision making, and fostering relationships.
- New Zealand Police provided trainers to assist with a **People Smuggling course** delivered at JCLEC, including three courses delivered trilaterally with AFP and RCMP completing the two phased courses completing 17 June.
- Additionally, the New Zealand Police Senior Liaison Officer (SLO) in Bangkok, and the two New Zealand Police Liaison Officers (PLO's) in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur all have been able to participate in **localised training and presentations**, to maintain and strengthen partnerships.

New Zealand remains concerned about irregular migration and its regional impact. As part of our contribution to managing the security and humanitarian challenges posed by irregular migration, New Zealand is an active and constructive member of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process). New Zealand provides support for regional capacity building, through our capacity building assistance to the Bali Process' Regional Support Office.

New Zealand also works closely with the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering to support the coordination of technical assistance in Southeast Asia and the Pacific to combat transnational organised criminal and terrorist groups, by targeting their financial systems and processes.

Additionally, New Zealand has funded and organised a number of regional capacity building workshops for ASEAN countries on key issues, including anti-money laundering/counter-terrorist financing standards, cyber security, terrorist prosecutions, chemical and nuclear security, major event security, and maritime and aviation security. These efforts are complemented by significant bilateral work to build individual national capability, especially within law enforcement agencies.

New Zealand participates in multilateral initiatives which engage on counter-terrorism projects in the region, including the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), for which we are pleased to support the extension of the CVE programme to the Philippines.

In addition to its work in South East Asia, New Zealand also works with Pacific Island Countries (PICs) to help strengthen resilience and build capacity to respond to a range of shared security challenges. In 2018, Pacific Islands Forum Leaders endorsed the Boe Declaration on Regional



Security, which affirms an expanded concept of security, recognising climate change as the preeminent security threat to the region. This expanded concept of security encompasses traditional and non-traditional challenges encountered by the region, prioritising human security, environmental security, transnational crime, and cyber security. New Zealand strongly supports the implementation of the Boe Declaration, and channels this through existing programmes related to climate change, information sharing, leadership training, cyber security, transnational crime, and national security policy development. These programmes are in addition to the number of initiatives New Zealand supports through the Pacific Islands Forum, including enhancing aviation and maritime security, and supporting the implementation of UN Security Council sanctions. New Zealand works closely with and funds regional law enforcement agencies such as the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Secretariat, Oceania Customs Organisation and the Pacific Immigration Development Community, and contributes to their consideration and responses to regional security issues. New Zealand also provides technical assistance, capacity building, and mentoring for law enforcement and border agency officials in the region.

One growing challenge the region faces is the unprecedented use of social media by terrorist groups. This has forced states to adapt, with many adopting sophisticated counter messaging protocols and systems to enable them to convey another view to would-be terrorists. In response to the use of social media as part of the March 15 2019 terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand developed (with France) the Christchurch Call to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online. The Call represents a unique effort to have technology companies and countries work together, with civil society, to tackle the shared problem of this content and its harmful effects, while protecting a free and open internet and human rights online.

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

New Zealand has a long-standing commitment to nuclear disarmament and non proliferation. New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty.

New Zealand is a key proponent of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). New Zealand ratified the TPNW Treaty in 2018 and, as one of its Core Group members, works to encourage non-signatory states to sign, and signatories to ratify the Treaty. New Zealand has continued its active promotion of nuclear disarmament more generally, including through its membership of the New Agenda Coalition.

New Zealand is a strong proponent of nuclear weapon-free zones in view of their role in reinforcing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments. New Zealand is party to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (Treaty of Rarotonga) and has had legislation in place since 1987 creating a New Zealand Nuclear-Free Zone. New Zealand strongly encourages all Nuclear Weapons States to ratify the Protocols to Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones, including the South East Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the Treaty of Rarotonga, without any reservations or interpretative declarations.

New Zealand supports the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as an important contribution to regional and global security. New Zealand has welcomed ratification of the CTBT by Annex 1 and 2 states in the region and encourages ratifications by all ARF participants.



New Zealand is a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which provides the global focal point for nuclear cooperation and safeguards. New Zealand is in full compliance with its safeguards obligations and supports international projects involving the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We routinely urge all states to sign Additional Protocol agreements with the IAEA.

New Zealand joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) in 2007, and, alongside over 80 GICNT partners, is committed to preventing nuclear or radiological material falling into the hands of terrorists. New Zealand has contributed to the GICNT in the IndoPacific region by: developing a table-top exercise kit for use by other GICNT partners in testing their own national response systems; supporting radioactive source security projects in Southeast Asia; providing funding support to GICNT workshops in the Indo-Pacific region; and helping its Pacific island neighbours address the risk of nuclear/radiological security.

New Zealand is a strong proponent of enhancing nuclear security. In 2016, New Zealand ratified two key nuclear security treaties: the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In 2016, New Zealand also enacted a new Radiation Safety Act to ensure its legislative framework for the safety and security of nuclear and radioactive material meets current international best practice. New Zealand has provided financial support for nuclear security capacity-building projects in the Indo-Pacific region. Additionally, we make annual voluntary contributions to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund.

New Zealand is a party to Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. We have provided financial assistance for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to assist with the removal of chemical weapons materials in Libya and Syria, and have spoken out strongly against the use of chemical weapons in Malaysia, Syria and the UK.

New Zealand has in place a comprehensive national export control regime. This is informed by our active membership of the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee. New Zealand was the chair of the Missile Technology Control Regime 2019-2020.

New Zealand's involvement in the Proliferation Security Initiative, including our membership of the Operational Experts Group (the PSI steering committee) and participation in exercises and capacity building initiatives has enhanced New Zealand's capabilities to prevent proliferation activity both nationally and in collaboration with partners. New Zealand has developed (and shared with PSI partners) a Model National Response Plan which provides easy-to-follow guidance on the range of issues that need to be considered in developing a framework for responding to proliferation situations. As part of the PSI Asia-Pacific exercise rotation, New Zealand hosted a PSI table-top exercise in Wellington in 2015 and is currently scheduled to host an exercise in 2023. New Zealand would welcome further adherence to the PSI throughout the IndoPacific as part of a coordinated effort to reduce the threat of WMD proliferation.

Given the role played by the unregulated global arms trade in fuelling conflict, New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which we ratified in 2014. The ATT is



an important contributor to international and regional peace, security and stability. New Zealand has been engaged in a breadth of initiatives that support broader membership, and greater implementation, of the Treaty, including as current Chair of the Treaty's Voluntary Trust Fund which has as its core objective the assistance of States Party to implement the Treaty. In our national capacity New Zealand has sponsored the development of ATT model legislation and a model control list, both of which can assist countries to implement their domestic obligations under the ATT. New Zealand hosted a conference in Auckland in 2018 to promote greater adherence to the ATT and other conventional arms treaties among Pacific Island countries, and co-sponsored – with significant support from Australia – a follow-up conference in Brisbane in 2019. New Zealand looks forward to continuing to work closely with its ARF partners on reinforcing the ATT.

New Zealand strongly supports the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the Anti-Personnel Landmine Ban Convention (APLMBC). Landmines and cluster munitions are indiscriminate weapons that – in New Zealand's view – breach International Humanitarian Law. As such, New Zealand is pleased to have worked with many ARF States on practical mine clearance operations, including in Cambodia and Lao PDR – some of the most mine-contaminated States on the planet, but which are making large and promising steps to meet their clearance obligations. New Zealand is the coordinator for national implementation measures in the CCM, and we have produced model legislation for possible use by small states with no history of use or contamination. New Zealand continues to work closely with ARF participants that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to both Conventions. In 2019, New Zealand sponsored and co-hosted alongside the governments of the Philippines and Sri Lanka, a regional workshop on CCM universalisation and implementation hosted in Manila, which included the participation of eight South Asia and Pacific States who are not yet signatories of the Convention.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

The Indo-Pacific region continues to be afflicted by natural disasters that underline the need to continue deepening practical and effective cooperation in relation to disaster reduction, response and recovery. New Zealand has been an active participant in ARF and EAS discussions about preparing for and responding to regional disasters.

New Zealand is continuing to play its part in deepening regional capacity to prepare and respond to disasters, including drawing on lessons learned from the Christchurch earthquakes. New Zealand is committed to further cooperation and implementation of work plans in ARF, ADMM-Plus and EAS contexts. Disaster Risk Management is a priority study area for our knowledge and skills investments in the Indo-Pacific region.

New Zealand has been a solid proponent of the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance (AHA) Centre since its inception, and has trained ASEAN officials in disaster response leadership at the University of Canterbury and contributed technical expertise to the Centre. We have recently jointly completed a needs assessment with the AHA Centre and will shortly move into design of an e-learning series based on the findings of the assessment. New Zealand made a contribution of NZ\$2.6 million to the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Centre (AHA) in 2022.

New Zealand has a strong legacy of supporting Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance in the Indo-Pacific region for nearly 20 years.



Maritime Security

Maritime Security, including the preservation of secure and sustainable oceans, is fundamental to New Zealand's security. Accordingly, New Zealand released a Maritime Security Strategy in 2021 to combat increasingly complex challenges to our maritime domain and borders and deliver guardianship over our maritime domain for future generations. New Zealand is not alone in facing these complex challenges. We value our maritime cooperation with ARF partners and have been actively involved in the implementation of the ARF's maritime security work plan, and in sharing our experiences on various maritime security-related issues, including upholding the rules-based system relating to the oceans, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, transnational crime, and marine environment issues.

In May 2018 New Zealand co-hosted with Singapore the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue. The dialogue included thematic sessions on maritime counter-terrorism, counter-terrorism interagency cooperation, and chemical, biological and radiological defence. More recently, New Zealand participated in the virtual 4th ARF Workshop on Enhancing Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation, and in the 3rd ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments to address Emerging Maritime Issues held virtually and in Ha Noi in early June 2021. New Zealand continues its active involvement in the ADMM-Plus Experts Working Group on Maritime Security and the ARF Maritime Security workstream.

ICTs Security

Connectivity is a crucial driver of our region's growth. However, with increased connectivity comes increased exposure to cyber threats. New Zealand remains concerned by the growing number of cyber incidents globally, including activity undertaken by both state and non-state actors. These incidents underscore the importance of adherence to and implementation of the framework of responsible state behavior online, comprised of international law, norms of responsible state behavior, confidence-building measures, and capacity-building.

New Zealand sees the ARF as an important forum to support implementation of the framework of responsible state behaviour online, and to improve transparency, understanding and confidence among regional partners in cyber space. To this end, we were pleased to participate in the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the use of ICTS in April 2022, and the associated Study Group on Confidence-Building Measures. We welcome Indonesia and Australia's confidence building proposal to host an ARF Workshop on Implementing Norms of Responsible States' Behaviours in Cyberspace, and look forward to further cooperation in this area.

New Zealand remains committed to building regional cyber security capacity, including through membership of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, with a particular focus on our Pacific and South-East Asian neighbours. We continue to deliver initiatives under New Zealand's NZ\$10 million Cyber Security Support to the Pacific programme, and support the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence.

New Zealand Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern signed the Europol Agreement on 1 July 2022, which symbolises our shared strong commitment to privacy and seeing justice for victims of crime. The Agreement reinforces New Zealand's strong data protection framework and



means New Zealand will have access to more information to disrupt and respond to the victims of serious crime and terrorism. This information will help disrupt and respond to transnational organised crime, drug trafficking, money laundering, child sexual exploitation, cybercrime, violent extremism, and terrorism.

II. Role of ARF

New Zealand's contributions to enhancing the ARF and regional security

For New Zealand, the ARF is a key mechanism for security engagement in the Indo-Pacific region and part of our broader relationship with the ASEAN region. It contributes to building an environment of dialogue and cooperation on a wide range of regional security issues. The ARF is also contributing in an important way to the development of international norms and principles on security that are directly relevant to this region. The number and diversity of practical ARF projects under implementation during the current intersessional year, reflects the ARF's ability to respond to contemporary security challenges facing this part of the world.

New Zealand also attaches considerable importance to working with its ARF partners to advance the ARF's preventive diplomacy agenda, in line with the ARF's three-stage evolution. In April 2019, New Zealand co-chaired with the US, Indonesia and Timor-Leste a Preventive Diplomacy Workshop on Early Warning Systems in Dili. This workshop followed two others co-chaired by New Zealand: one on negotiation and mediation in Naypyidaw in September 2018 (with the US and Myanmar) and one on Preventive Diplomacy in a Post-conflict Environment in Dili in April 2017 (with Singapore and Timor-Leste). In 2020-2021, New Zealand co-chaired with the US and Indonesia an additional preventive diplomacy series building on this earlier work. The first workshop was held by the US in November 2020 and New Zealand hosted the second part in July 2021, a virtual "study tour" of preventive diplomacy methods in action in New Zealand's domestic context and preventive diplomacy practiced by New Zealand in the region. The aim of this study tour was to enable ARF participants to enhance their understanding and capacity to employ preventive diplomacy methods to prevent and mitigate conflict between and among States. This year, we are supporting a table-top exercise, to be held in-person in Indonesia, as a third part of this series. This table-top exercise will enable participants to put these tools and methods of conflict mitigation into practice.

New Zealand is committed to working with its ASEAN partners to ensure coherence between the ARF and other pieces of the regional architecture, in particular the EAS and ADMM-Plus. While the ARF and ADMM-Plus have their distinct mandates and different memberships, greater functional coordination between them on issues that straddle multiple fora, such as disaster relief/management, cyber security and maritime security, would help to achieve streamlining and eliminate unnecessary duplication of activities. New Zealand also actively supports efforts to strengthen the EAS, to ensure it can fulfil its role as the region's premier forum for leaders to address issues of strategic risk.

III. Future of ARF

The ARF is a forum that was established with the aim of fostering habits of constructive dialogue on issues of concern. At the ARF's outset it was envisaged that the Forum would move as part

of its evolution from a confidence building phase to preventive diplomacy, and finally to conflict resolution. The ARF has constructed a solid base of confidence building measures and made progress in the field of preventive diplomacy. It has the potential to do more.

New Zealand supports the ARF in increasing its capacity and effectiveness in the preventive diplomacy space, and encourages all participants to keep an eye to the future to ensure we are well-equipped when we move into the conflict resolution phase.

New Zealand remains committed to the principles of peace and security underpinning the ARF. We encourage dialogue and capacity building among members to achieve our collective aims in strengthening regional security. At a time of heightened geopolitical tensions, our ability to come together, engage in dialogue and share experiences to resolve tensions is more important than ever.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The situation in the Asia-Pacific region is influenced by growing international tensions. However, despite the unfavorable conditions complicated by the risks of new waves of COVID-19 and geopolitical turbulence, multilateral ASEAN-led fora in the Asia-Pacific remain committed to peaceful and constructive cooperation and deepening inclusive transregional connectivity.

Establishment of closed political-military blocs operating in the logic of containment and deterrence, which runs counter to current region-wide cooperation model, constitute an alternative to the ASEAN-led security system with its open and equitable dialogue mechanisms and poses a major threat to it. Such an alarming trend is fraught with the destruction of existing ASEAN-led architecture of international relations in the region.

The continuing militarization of the Asia-Pacific and the growing presence of the US, British, German, French and Japanese Navies, including those with an aircraft carrier strike capability, in regional waters, especially in the South China Sea lead to emerging of new risks and dividing barriers, reduce the possibilities for cooperation.

The recent attempts of Japan to promote the concept of the “indivisible security” covering exclusively the Euro-Atlantic and the “Indo-Pacific” regions, showcases the policy aimed at expanding NATO capacity and presence in Asia. The Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in April 2022 with Asia-Pacific partner \ countries – Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, and New Zealand – highlighted that the Alliance is finalizing the globalization of its mandate, focusing, inter alia, on East Asia. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has repeatedly stated that the Asian region and the South China Sea waters are within NATO’s area of responsibility.

Against this backdrop, Russia keeps unchanged its position in favour of resolving territorial disputes in the South China Sea through diplomatic means on the basis of international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982, as well as joint documents between ASEAN and China – the Declaration on the Conduct (DOC) of Parties in the South China Sea of 2002 and the Guidelines for the Implementation of the DOC of 2011. The Code of Conduct in the South China Sea being drafted by the ASEAN Member States and China is intended to be an effective mechanism for resolving disputes.

There are growing elements of neo-colonialism in Australian and New Zealand policy in the South Pacific. Canberra’s and Wellington’s attempts to limit the rights of the small island developing countries in this sub-region to pursue independent foreign policy and choose international cooperation partners clearly demonstrates their intentions to decide the future of island peoples as before.

A prerequisite for international efforts to resolve the situation in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar should be a consistent commitment to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs, neutrality, as well as non-use of political and diplomatic pressure and sanctions, especially those bypassing the UN Security Council.

We welcome the measures taken by Cambodia as ASEAN Chair to bring together the approaches of Nay Pyi Taw and other ASEAN Member States with a view to implement the Five-Point Consensus endorsed at the ASEAN Special Summit on Myanmar in April 2021. The attempts of certain members of the international community to establish contacts with the self-proclaimed Government of National Unity of Myanmar and create the preconditions for its eventual international recognition will only lead to aggravation of the armed confrontation in the country.

There is no progress in settlement of the situation on the Korean Peninsula. The United States, despite its declared commitment to the Singapore Statement signed with the DPRK in 2018, failed to take any practical steps toward Pyongyang to address its legitimate security concerns. All parties involved should refrain from actions that lead to an escalation of tensions and return to dialogue on confidence-building, normalization of bilateral relations, security guarantees and building a peace regime in Northeast Asia. Only under this condition denuclearization issues could be discussed constructively. The basis for this work could be the Russian-Chinese plan of action for a comprehensive settlement on the Korean Peninsula. It is aimed not only at creating a multilateral system of peace and security in the sub-region, but also at building mutually beneficial economic ties and developing humanitarian cooperation.

Russia consistently advocates the gradual lifting of sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council on Pyongyang subject to the progress of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We believe that broad interpretation of international restrictions is inadmissible and call for minimizing negative humanitarian impact of the current restrictions on the DPRK population.

With the Taliban Movement coming to power in Afghanistan in August 2021 and the withdrawal of the United States and NATO troops, the military and political situation in the country has somewhat stabilized. At the same time, it is complicated by the international terrorist organizations, such as ISIL, Al-Qaeda, Uzbekistan and Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movements which use illegal production and trafficking of drugs as source of financing. Afghanistan remains world's largest supplier of opiates (up to 90% of the market).

The new Afghan authorities are making efforts to ensure security and normal economic activities of the population. Meanwhile, the United States and its allies are trying to shift their financial responsibility for the post-conflict reconstruction of the Afghan economy to other countries, exacerbating the humanitarian situation in the country by freezing Afghan assets.

Steps taken by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the extended "Troika" (Russia, China, the United States and Pakistan), as well as the Moscow format of consultations on Afghanistan and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) play an important role in Afghanistan's settlement and development.



II. Defence Policy of the Russian Federation and International Military Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific

The activities of the Russian Armed Forces in the Asia-Pacific are carried out in compliance with international norms and bilateral agreements, posing no threat to peace and stability in the region. Russia is determined to expand bilateral and multilateral military contacts.

Russia assigns a particular role in ensuring regional stability to the mechanism of ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meetings-Plus (ADMM-Plus). Within its framework Russia, together with Myanmar, co-chairs Expert Working Group on Counter-Terrorism in 2020-2023. Special emphasis is given to sharing the experience of engaging armed forces and using modern weapons, military and special equipment in the fight against terrorist groups, as well as organizing Table Top and Field Training Exercise at the end of 2023.

The Russian Ministry of Defence is developing cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries, primarily China, India and ASEAN Member States. High-level contacts have been maintained with Brunei, Viet Nam, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and the Philippines, both in person and online.

The strategic partnership between Russia and China was demonstrated by the joint operational and strategic Sibur/Cooperation-2021 exercises in August 2021, which saw the signing of a memorandum on the establishment of twinning relationship, and the joint naval Maritime Cooperation-2021 exercises in October 2021 in the Sea of Japan that became an important element of maintaining regional and global security. In May 2022, the Russian Aerospace Forces and Chinese Air Force conducted joint air patrol over the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea.

Russia continues to strengthen military and military-technical cooperation with India. In December 2021, an intergovernmental Agreement on Military-Technical Cooperation Programme for 2021-2031 was signed. As part of the INDRA programme, in July and August 2021, the two countries conducted annual naval exercises in the Baltic Sea and anti-terror drills of land forces in southern Russia. In January 2022, the Russian-Indian PASSEX exercises were carried out in the waters of Indian port of Kochi. Contracts for the supply of S-400 SAMs and multi-purpose frigates are being implemented on schedule. The parties have been proceeding with launching of joint defence ventures to produce military equipment in accordance with national programs "Make in India" and "Self-Reliant India". Interaction with Pakistan is aimed at strengthening its counter-terrorism capabilities. In February 2021, on Islamabad's invitation a detachment of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Navy participated in Aman multinational naval exercise and Arabian Monsoon bilateral naval exercise. In September 2021, Pakistani personnel took part in Peaceful Mission-2021 multinational military exercise of SCO Member States. In September-October 2021, Russia hosted Russia-Pakistan Friendship-2021 exercise.

The first ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise (ARNEX), held in the territorial waters of Indonesia in November-December 2021, became a significant milestone in the cooperation with ASEAN. The navies of Brunei, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Myanmar participated in the event. The Philippines, Laos and Cambodia were represented by observers. The exercise consisted of two phases (harbour and sea) aimed at strengthening collaboration between the Russian Navy and the navies of ASEAN Member States to ensure the safety of maritime economic activity and civil navigation in the region.

We continue to attach great importance to the friendly calls of Russian ships to the ports of ASEAN Member States (in 2021 – the ports of Myanmar and the Philippines). Experts from the International Mine Action Center of the Russian Ministry of Defence continued to provide assistance in clearing Lao territory of explosive remnants of the Indochina War and training deminers from among the Lao military personnel. In August 2021, the second Russia-Laos tank crew exercise Laros-2021 was held in the Russian Far East.

The IX Moscow Conference on International Security in June 2021 was attended by the Ministers of Defence of Bangladesh, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines and Viet Nam, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Myanmar, and representatives of Brunei, Pakistan, Singapore, India, Sri Lanka and the Republic of Korea.

India, Mongolia, and Sri Lanka sent their military personnel to Zapad-2021 Russia-Belarus strategic exercise that took place in September 2021, while representatives of Bangladesh, Viet Nam, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Pakistan participated as observers.

The participation of Asia-Pacific nations in the International Army Games 2021 organized by the Ministry of Defence of Russia in August-September 2021 (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam) and International Military-Technical Forum Army in August 2021 contributed to strengthening defence ties with these countries.

1. Nuclear and Missile Disarmament, Nuclear Security, and Non-Proliferation of WMD in the Asia-Pacific Region

Strict compliance with international arms control treaties and agreements is one of the basic principles of Russian foreign policy reflected in its fundamental doctrinal documents. Russia scrupulously observes all provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), reduces its nuclear arsenal and the role of nuclear weapons in defence policy.

In June 2021, at the Russia-United States Summit, the two Presidents confirmed their adherence to the principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. This principle was also set out in the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races published in 2022. Russia played a significant role in reaching agreement on this statement.

Our country has ensured timely compliance with limits for warheads and means of delivery provided for in the Russia-US Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms of 2010 (New START), and strictly observes the treaty limits. Russia's proposal for all stakeholders to consider concrete measures to address the existing concerns regarding ground-launched intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, as well as ways to maintain stability and prevent missile crises remains relevant.

The steps taken by the United States to build a global BMD system and deploy its elements in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as Tokyo's rapid military build-up, which in reality is not limited to defensive purposes, undermine strategic stability and security interests of the countries of the region.



For the same reason, we are concerned about the establishment of the enhanced trilateral security partnership – AUKUS (the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom) in September 2021. Plans to pump weapons into Australia (from nuclear-powered submarines to hypersonic missiles) and create shared infrastructure in the country for deployment of nuclear weapons means of delivery, as well as to enhance the US military rotational presence there and expansion of the US Air Force in the South Pacific with the assistance of Canberra, have a destabilizing effect on the NPT regime and could trigger an arms race in the Asia-Pacific region.

The deployment of military personnel and weapons of nuclear powers in Australia would call into question Canberra's trustworthiness as a party to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (the Treaty of Rarotonga), as well as the rationale for providing this country with security assurances as a state party to a nuclear-weapon free zone (NWFZ).

Russia reaffirms its readiness to sign the Protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty with standard reservations that only grow more relevant in the current situation. We are open to consultations between the P5 and ASEAN to institutionalize this nuclear-weapon-free zone as soon as possible.

After uncovering prohibited biological activities conducted by the United States and NATO countries in Ukraine, we have been particularly alarmed by the US military and biological program in Southeast and East Asia, as well as the operation of such biological laboratories in Cambodia (the US Naval Medical Research Unit 2 Detachment – NAMRU-2), Singapore (Naval Medical Research Center-Asia – NMRC-A), Thailand (the Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences – AFRIMS), etc.

The threat of an arms race in outer space and its transformation into a stage for aggression and war is of serious concern. The draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects, proposed by Russia and China, aims at countering these negative trends. At the 76th session of the UN General Assembly, our resolution entitled “No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space” (NFP) was co-sponsored by 36 countries, including eight Asia-Pacific nations. Moreover, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam are full-fledged NFP participants who made relevant political commitment in bilateral statements signed with Russia.

2. Combating International Terrorism and Transnational Crime in the Asia-Pacific Region

With the increasing number of global problems and a broadening range of transborder threats, the Russian Federation remains focused on expanding cooperation with Asia-Pacific nations on a full variety of issues related to fighting terrorism, transnational organized crime, piracy, armed robbery at sea, illicit drug production and trafficking. Special emphasis is traditionally put on fighting ISIL, Al-Qaida, and affiliated terrorist organizations, as well as foreign terrorist fighters, suppressing terrorism financing and the spread of terrorist and extremist ideology, including in the Internet. The COVID-19 outbreak has given rise to additional opportunities for terrorists to step up their activity, mobilize their supporters and promote terrorist ideology online.

The pandemic has also highlighted new threats in the anti-drug area, including the active use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) by drug criminals. We welcome the

adoption of a statement in this regard by the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in April 2021 with the support of the majority of Asia-Pacific nations and organization of a special thematic side-event.

Given the growing risks of the use of chemicals and biological agents by terrorists, most Asia-Pacific nations continue to support the Russia's 2016 initiative to develop at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament an international convention on the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism in order to counter WMD terrorism.

We consider unreasonable attempts to shift the focus from countering and preventing terrorism to other issues, including human rights and gender-related matters, as well as to erode the pivotal role of states in combating terrorism and extremism by promoting the concept of violent extremism, aimed at substituting the existing international legal regime for some "rule-based order" that allows interference in the internal affairs of nations.

We deem unacceptable the attempts of the "collective West" to turn the key areas of the international cooperation – those relating to counter-terrorism and the drug problem – into an arena of confrontation. Encouragement of xenophobic, nationalistic, neo-Nazi and other radical manifestations in certain countries in order to destabilize the situation and to undermine regional political and economic ties for the sake of advancing geopolitical interests are also inadmissible.

Under such circumstances, further strengthening of non-politicized, equitable and pragmatic international cooperation within the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Partnership becomes particularly important. The ASEAN-Russia Statement on Cooperation against Illicit Drugs Trafficking, adopted at the 4th ASEAN-Russia Summit in October 2021, has laid a solid foundation for the development of practical cooperation between Russia and the ASEAN Member States in addressing drug problem. The issue of counter-terrorism as a factor of economic growth security in the Asia-Pacific continues to be relevant on the APEC agenda.

3. International Information Security in the Asia-Pacific

Cooperation in the field of international information security (IIS) with Asia-Pacific nations both within relevant global and regional frameworks and at bilateral level is a priority of the Russian foreign policy. Russia believes that regional mechanisms should take into account the UN's central role and the objective of developing universal legal instruments that contribute to information security and countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes. Regional frameworks provide important opportunity for development of cooperation between the competent authorities of states and coordination of confidence-building measures.

The abovementioned approaches guide interaction with the Asia-Pacific partners at relevant UN negotiating fora, notably within the framework of the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021-2025, and the UN Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes.



We attach particular importance to the development of practical cooperation in that area within the ARF. During the 28th ARF, Russia was approved as one of the co-chairs of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of ICTs for 2022-2024. The ARF reaffirmed the decisions to continue the discussion initiated by our country on Terminology in the Field of IIS and on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes. Two workshops on these issues were co-chaired by Russia, Thailand, Cambodia and China in March and April 2022.

We commend the consolidating role of major regional conferences on information security hosted by ASEAN Member States. In 2021 Russia participated in the inaugural CYDES 2021 International Conference and Exhibition, as well as in the Singapore International Cyber Week.

4. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief in the Asia-Pacific

Russia continues to promote regional disaster management and humanitarian assistance cooperation, focusing on emergency response capacity building in the Asia-Pacific, in particular the development of the Global Network of Crisis Management Centers (CMCs). Special attention is paid to the development of practical cooperation and sharing of experience in that area within the ARF. In July 2021 EMERCOM specialists participated in the ARF Enhancement Training on USAR Capacity Building and Comprehensive USAR Drill.

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Disaster Management in February 2021 contributed to enhancing the Russia-ASEAN cooperation on emergency response. The prospects for the Memorandum's implementation, targeted use of space technology and personnel training were discussed on the sidelines of relevant ASEAN meetings in June and August 2021.

We attach great importance to the activities of the APEC Emergency Preparedness Working Group, which promotes a more disaster-resilient environment in the region. Russian experts have made significant contribution to extending its mandate until 2025. In August 2021, they participated in an APEC Workshop on Disaster Risk Management Strategies to Support MSMEs Business Sustainability. EMERCOM specialists have been sharing their experience with the SCO partners, in particular during a workshop on providing medical support in rescue operations and combating biosocial risks and epidemics in September 2021.

Special emphasis is placed on developing emergency response cross-border cooperation with neighbouring countries. The development of search and rescue teams and their use in emergency response operations abroad, the exchange of experience between research and educational institutions, as well as earthquake risk reduction, are important aspects of cooperation with Beijing. Russia and China carry out annual joint patrols in the Amur River and coordination of flood control measures. Russia works closely with Mongolia on prevention of wildfires, industrial accidents, and natural disasters; we foster the development of diving service and professional training of personnel.

We continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the countries in need within the UN framework. In December 2021 Russia made a special-purpose contribution of \$11 million to the UN World Food Programme to assist Cambodia, Laos and Sri Lanka in strengthening school catering system, and in 2021 – a contribution of \$3 million to provide relief to the DPRK. A special



Russia-funded WHO project serves to support regional countries in emergency situations. Technical assistance to developing partners is also provided through the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. In 2021, through bilateral channels Russia delivered humanitarian aid to India, Viet Nam, Laos and Sri Lanka to combat COVID-19.

5. Regional Security Architecture and Trends of Multilateral Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific

ASEAN-led fora, as reliable multilateral collective crisis response mechanisms, have always been key tools for addressing common challenges and threats to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific. The current attempts to undermine these mechanisms and remove non-politicized initiatives from their agenda that could contribute to a de-escalation of increasing tensions in Asia, and to transfer all practical activities to the bloc-based “interest groups”, represent a direct attack on the pillars of existing regional security and cooperation architecture.

We invariably support the strengthening of ASEAN Centrality in the regional system of international relations based on international law, peaceful settlement of disputes, culture of compromise and mutual respect. We consistently uphold the basic principles of sovereign equality of all participants and consensus decision-making in ASEAN-led fora with a view to enhancing their international standing and authority and preserving the existing cooperation models.

We consider ARF as key regional framework to promote confidence-building measures and introduce preventive diplomacy initiatives, and call for further consolidation of the Forum and increase of its practical value. The necessary prerequisite for this is an atmosphere of constructive and equitable dialogue, as well as the willingness of all participants without exception to adhere to ARF’s high standards of inclusivity.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified and accelerated global challenges that were already in motion, including major power rivalry, nationalistic and protectionist tendencies, and a weakening of the multilateral rules-based order. Russia's invasion of Ukraine, on which ASEAN Foreign Ministers have issued three statements, has also brought into focus the importance of the fundamental norms of international law and the UN Charter which prohibit acts of aggression against a sovereign state. Non-traditional security threats such as transnational crime and terrorism remain unabated and increased reliance on digitalisation further exacerbated society's vulnerabilities to cybercrimes. It is all the more important that ASEAN and its partners continue to make use of ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus Three (APT), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), East Asia Summit (EAS), and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to strengthen mutual confidence and trust, and enhance practical cooperation among the key stakeholders of our region to tackle common challenges. ASEAN can only be relevant and effective as a regional bloc if it remains at the core of the regional architecture. It must stay innovative and continually reinvent itself to meet the needs of our citizens as security threats evolve. Singapore will continue to work towards strengthening ASEAN-related initiatives and mechanisms with ASEAN Centrality as our guiding principle.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

Singapore's defence policy is built on the twin pillars of deterrence and diplomacy. Singapore believes in the need for a strong defence to ensure that we enjoy peace and security. This also provides us with the space and freedom to act in the best interests of our people. Hence, Singapore has invested steadily and prudently in defence over the years to build up a professional and capable Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). To overcome our small size and lack of resources, Singapore makes use of technology as a force multiplier to augment our well-educated conscript force and to train our soldiers to fight effectively. The SAF has also played an important role in assisting in domestic contingencies, such as supporting Singapore's COVID-19 response efforts by supplementing civilian frontline services. Singapore's defence expenditure in FY2020 stood at 2.8 per cent of our Gross Domestic Product.

1. National Contributions to Regional Security

Singapore firmly believes in the value of diplomacy and dialogue to enhance regional and international stability and tackle common security challenges. As a small country, Singapore's security and prosperity are highly dependent on regional peace and stability. Through extensive bilateral and multilateral cooperation, Singapore seeks to establish strong and friendly ties with defence establishments and armed forces regionally and globally. Singapore also believes that regional security and stability are best served by a robust, open and inclusive security architecture that encourages countries to engage constructively in dialogue and practical cooperation. As such, Singapore actively participates in ASEAN-led platforms like the ADMM, ADMM-Plus, EAS, ARF as well as other multilateral fora like the Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD) and the Five Power Defence Arrangements.

The ADMM is the highest defence consultative and cooperative mechanism in ASEAN which aims to promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and practical cooperation. The ADMM commemorated its 15th anniversary in 2021. Singapore actively contributes to the ADMM and ADMM-Plus. Under the Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) Defence Experts, Singapore contributes towards strengthening regional capacity to deal with CBR threats. Since its inaugural meeting in 2019, the Network has kept up a steady momentum of meetings, training and workshops in each CBR domain, covering topics of interest such as on scientific cooperation against COVID-19. Regional and international experts are invited as resource speakers to exchange views and experiences. In 2022, Singapore will host the ADMM-Plus CBR Conference to underscore the importance of international cooperation in this area. Another area of contribution is in the cyber and information domains. Singapore established the ADMM Cybersecurity and Information Centre of Excellence (ACICE) in 2021. The purpose of the ACICE is to enhance information sharing and capacity building among defence establishments against cyber and information threats.

The ADMM-Plus enables practical cooperation within the 18 ADMM-Plus countries through the Experts Working Groups (EWGs). The EWGs focus on maritime security (MS), humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), peacekeeping operations (PKO), counter-terrorism (CT), military medicine (MM), humanitarian mine action (HMA), and cyber security (CS). The fourth three-year EWG cycle began in 2021. Singapore is committed to sustaining military-to-military cooperation and to building trust and confidence between militaries through the EWGs.

Singapore is also an active proponent of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) among militaries and defence establishments. CBMs can help to reduce miscalculations and preserve a peaceful and stable regional security environment. Under Singapore and ROK's co-chairmanship of the EWG-MS from 2017-2020, the ADMM-Plus navies agreed to collectively adopt the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES). CUES continues to be practised at several ASEAN naval exercises, such as the 2018 ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise, the 2019 ADMM-Plus Maritime Exercise and the 2021 ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise. Another CBM proposed by Singapore and adopted by the ADMM is the Guidelines for Air Military Encounters (GAME). GAME is the first multilateral air-to-air confidence-building measure of its kind. It provides airmen with a set of guidelines to enhance aviation safety and reduce miscalculations or unintended incidents between military aircraft in the air. The ADMM and ADMM-Plus will continue to identify opportunities to practise GAME.

Singapore also hosts the annual SLD organised by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). Since its inception in 2002, the SLD has established itself as the foremost defence and security conference in the Asia-Pacific region. The 18th SLD was held from 31 May to 2 June 2019 and was attended by 33 Ministerial-level delegates and over 30 Chiefs of Defence Forces and senior defence officials, as well as prominent academics from 47 countries in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East. PM Lee Hsien Loong delivered the keynote address in commemoration of Singapore's Bicentennial and participants exchanged candid views on pertinent security issues, including global terrorism and cyberattacks. After a two-year hiatus due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the SLD will be held in-person in Jun 2022. The IISS Sherpa Meetings supplement the SLD process by providing an inter-sessional platform for senior officials to engage in frank discussions on security issues, have been held annually.



i. Counter-Terrorism

Terrorism and its underlying ideologies pose complex and long-term challenges. Modes of radicalisation have evolved with rising consumption of digital content. Continued vigilance and international cooperation are vital to deal with this threat.

Since the 1997 Declaration on Transnational Crime, ASEAN's counter-terrorism efforts have made much progress. Singapore was one of the first AMS to ratify the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism (ACCT) in 2007, which is the first regional legally-binding anti-terrorism pact. Recognising the importance of preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism, Singapore supported the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism 2018-2025 in 2018. More recently, Singapore actively contributed to the drafting of the Work Plan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism 2019-2025 ("Bali Work Plan") and supported its adoption at the 13th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime in November 2019. Singapore also supported the ARF Statement on the Treatment of Children Recruited by or Associated with Terrorist Groups in 2020. Singapore welcomes these significant achievements by ASEAN, which enhance regional cooperation and commitment to the global strategy on counter-terrorism.

Singapore is committed to strengthening the regional counter-terrorism security architecture. We support the ASEAN "Our Eyes" (AOE) initiative that was adopted by the 12th ADMM in 2018 and its Standard Operating Procedures that was adopted by the 14th ADMM in 2020. The AOE enhances strategic information exchange on counter-terrorism among ASEAN defence establishments. At the military level, we support the ASEAN 365 Information Sharing Platform that was established in October 2018 as an online portal for ASEAN military intelligence agencies to share information on counter-terrorism. In 2021, we operationalised the Counter Terrorism Information Facility as an operational level CT information-sharing initiative.

In 2019, Singapore seconded a senior Police Officer to kick-start the work of the INTERPOL Regional Counter-terrorism Node for Asia and South Pacific (RCTN ASP) located in the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI), Singapore. Singapore's seconded officer heads the RCTN ASP, covers as Head of RCTN Americas (including U.S., Canada and Latin America) and oversees the CT representation of 74 member countries. The RCTN ASP works with police units in the Asia-Pacific region to encourage the transfer of intelligence concerning terrorist activities. It also has access to 18 INTERPOL databases that provide information including on foreign terrorist fighters, the social media platforms that terrorists use, and their travel patterns and mode of transport. Singapore has been actively engaging INTERPOL to shape the RCTN and its mission in four main areas:

1. intelligence;
2. border management and operations;
3. capacity building; and
4. incident response. Singapore's seconded officer to the RCTN was appointed the mission leader of the INTERPOL Incident Response Team to support the Sri Lankan authorities in their investigations into the Easter Sunday Bombings in May 2019.

ii. Non-Proliferation, Counter-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Singapore is active in combating the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). We ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1976 and concluded a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1977. Singapore also ratified the IAEA Additional Protocol (AP) and adopted the modified Small Quantities Protocol in March 2008. Singapore supports the universalisation of both the CSA and the AP, and works closely with the IAEA on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Singapore serves regularly on the IAEA's Board of Governors (BOG), most recently from September 2016 to September 2018 and hosted regional workshops on topics such as emergency preparedness and response, nuclear regulatory law, and nuclear safety. Singapore is also party to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and supports its early entry into force. To promote a more robust nuclear non-proliferation regime in our region, Singapore hosted a "Regional Seminar on Developing Effective State Authorities for Nuclear Safeguards Implementation" in January 2020, which was organised by the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

Singapore joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in May 2010 and subscribed to The Hague Code of Conduct against the Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles in August 2011. In September 2014, Singapore acceded to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and accepted the 2005 Amendment to the CPPNM. Singapore ratified the International Convention on the Suppression of Nuclear Terrorism in September 2017.

Singapore signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the first legally binding international instrument that regulates the international transfer of conventional arms, on 5 December 2014. This reaffirms Singapore's commitment to the elimination of the threat posed by the illicit arms trade, and to international disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives that promote global peace and security.

Singapore strongly supports counter-proliferation initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), and recognises the importance of preventing rogue groups, such as terrorist organisations, from acquiring WMD. Singapore has actively participated in the PSI since its establishment in 2003. Singapore is one of the 21 members of the PSI Operational Experts' Group (OEG). As part of the PSI Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation (APER) grouping, we have hosted PSI exercises and meetings. In October 2021, Singapore hosted Exercise Deep Sabre, which was the fourth time Singapore hosted a PSI exercise.

Singapore fully supports the efforts of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to further develop capabilities and readiness against the threat of chemical weapons. We participated in the 25th Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in November 2020. Pursuant to Article X of the OPCW, Singapore has been conducting the Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents training course on a biennial basis since 2009. The sixth instalment of the course was conducted in December 2019, which benefitted 24 participants from 10 of the OPCW Member States in Asia. The course has been a platform for the sharing of experiences on the management of hazards. In addition, Singapore values the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Scientific Advisory Board of the OPCW as a participant of the Temporary Working Group on Investigative Science and Technology, and



to contribute an expert to serve on the Technical Requirement Team of the OPCW ChemTech centre since February 2020. Since 2012, Singapore has also been submitting returns on the Biological Weapons Convention's (BWC) CBMs annually.

As a reflection of our commitment to prevent WMD proliferation, Singapore adheres to a robust and enhanced export control regime. The Strategic Goods (Control) Act controls the transfer and brokering of goods capable of being used to develop, produce, operate, stockpile or acquire WMD, along with strategic goods and related software and technology. The Act's control list is regularly updated to ensure that it keeps abreast of technological developments and remains aligned with the four multilateral export control regimes. In May 2018, Singapore Customs organised the Customs Competent Authority Seminar to enhance awareness of the trading community on the regulatory requirements for various controlled goods and recent developments.

iii. Transnational Crime

In today's world, security challenges are increasingly transnational in nature. These cannot be adequately addressed by individual countries' domestic policies. Singapore has therefore actively worked towards facilitating a concerted regional effort to combat transnational crimes.

Under the aegis of the ASEAN Ministerial and Senior Officials' Meetings on Transnational Crime (AMMTC & SOMTC), Singapore is the ASEAN Voluntary Lead Shepherd for international economic crime (IEC). Singapore conducted an annual ASEAN Workshop on International Economic Crime to equip relevant investigators with the competencies required for the investigation of commercial crime. These workshops reviewed the latest trends, threats, and challenges facing law enforcement agencies in the area of commercial crime and provided updates on the latest developments in white-collar crime. The last workshop was organised in 2019, and covered common concerns such as international fraud, payment systems fraud and money laundering).

Additionally, the Singapore Police Force's Commercial Affairs Department (SPF/CAD) runs the annual International Economic Crime Course (IECC). This course was attended by local and foreign participants from ASEAN countries and our regional partners such as Hong Kong, and Australia.

The Singapore Police Force actively supports various INTERPOL operations aimed at tackling transnational financial crime. Between June and September 2021, Singapore participated in Project HAECHI-II which saw police across 22 jurisdictions arrest more than 1,000 individuals and intercept a total of nearly USD 27 million of illicit funds. In December 2021, SPF/CAD partnered with INTERPOL on Project TORII, a capacity-building initiative which aims to establish stronger collaboration against illicit financial flows derived from transnational financial crimes in Southeast Asia.

Singapore takes a serious view of trafficking-in-persons (TIP) crimes. An inter-agency taskforce, jointly led by Singapore's Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Manpower, was formed in 2010 to coordinate whole-of-government strategies to fight TIP. The Taskforce works closely with the law enforcement agencies and embassies of countries that victims may originate from.

Information-sharing and upstream enforcement against human traffickers also prevent the exploitation of the innocent.

Singapore supports regional and international efforts to combat TIP. Singapore cooperates with other AMS through platforms such as the AMMTC and SOMTC, which oversees the region's effort to combat TIP. Singapore worked closely with other AMS on the development of the ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP) which was signed by ASEAN Leaders at the 27th ASEAN Summit in November 2015. Following the signing of the ACTIP, Singapore also worked closely with other AMS on the development of the ASEAN Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons (APA) and the Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan, which were endorsed in 2015 and 2016 respectively. The APA and Work Plan complement the ACTIP by outlining specific actions and policies to address the challenge of combatting TIP.

Beyond ASEAN, Singapore works with partners such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as well as the Group of Friends United Against Human Trafficking (GOF) in New York and Geneva, to explore more effective ways to combat TIP. In 2019, Singapore attended the 5th Ministerial Breakfast Meeting hosted by the GOF in New York on the sidelines of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Singapore also co-sponsored an event organised by Belarus on behalf of the GOF in Geneva on combatting TIP in the context of armed conflict held on the sidelines of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2019. Singapore is also a party to the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (UN TIP Protocol), which seeks to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons while protecting victims and promoting cooperation among State Parties.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Disasters can affect any country without warning. As a good neighbour and friend, Singapore undertakes HADR missions when the need arises.

Singapore successfully concluded the Chairmanship of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) in 2021 that saw the launch of three new ASEAN Plus One mechanisms with China, Japan and ROK which will contribute towards the enhancement of the regional capacities and capabilities in disaster management and resiliency. The 6th ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Partnership Conference held in June 2021 generated pledges close to USD 11 million from 21 partners to support the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme 2021 – 2025. ASEAN also rallied support to operationalise the ASEAN Leaders' mandate for ASEAN's humanitarian assistance to Myanmar to be delivered through the AHA Centre in support of Point 4 of the Five-Point Consensus.

In 2019, Singapore deployed two officers to be part of two ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) missions. The first mission was in support of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre)'s efforts to conduct a preliminary needs assessment to identify possible areas where ASEAN could support the repatriation process in the Rakhine State in March 2019. The second mission was to support the Myanmar Delegation's 2nd High Level Visit to Bangladesh in December 2019.



Apart from overseas operations, Singapore also seeks to build regional capacity for HADR. Singapore launched the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) in September 2014 to provide a platform for military-to-military coordination in HADR, and to support the military of a disaster-affected State. The RHCC's focus on military coordination complements existing disaster response institutions – such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the AHA Centre. Singapore is appreciative of like-minded countries that have supported and partnered with the RHCC. These countries include Australia, Brunei, Canada, China, France, India, Lao PDR, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, the ROK, Russia, Thailand, the UK, the US, and Vietnam, which have attached International Liaison Officers (ILOs) to the RHCC or exchanged contact points for disaster relief.

From 2 to 4 April 2019, the RHCC/SAF partnered the Bangladesh Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, the Bangladesh Armed Forces Division, and the US Center for Excellence in Disaster Management (CFE-DM) to co-organise a multinational HADR Table-Top Exercise, Exercise Coordinated Response (COORES) 2019. COORES built military linkages, enhanced mutual understanding and interoperability, and strengthened military cooperation in disaster relief. COORES involved 25 militaries from across the Asia-Pacific region and Europe and 19 international organisations, governmental agencies and non-government organisations.

Since 2015, Singapore has been hosting the annual Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM) to chart long-term strategies for the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and sharpen ASEAN's policy direction, strategic engagements, and thought leadership in disaster management. The SPDDM 2021 was convened virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. In addition, Singapore organises the ASEAN Senior Executive Programme in Disaster Management, (SEPDM) annually to nurture the planning and crisis management capacities, and facilitate networking of the senior leadership cadre within each AMS' National Disaster Management Organisation.

v. Maritime Security

As a maritime nation, Singapore has a strong interest in keeping the international sea lines of communication open, safe, and secure. Singapore takes a serious view of any threats to the freedom and safety of navigation. To this end, Singapore works with like-minded countries to uphold universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and plays an active part in fostering regional maritime security cooperation and enhancing port security.

As a major hub port and one of the top ten ship registries in the world, Singapore is committed to the security of seaborne cargo. As one of the first States to implement the International Maritime Organization (IMO) International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, Singapore has contributed actively to capacity building programmes at various regional forums to assist countries in their implementation of the ISPS Code. Singapore is also party to the IMO's International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention 1988), and the 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms located on the Continental Shelf (SUA FFP 1988).

Given the existence of vital sea lines of communication in the region such as the South China Sea (SCS), the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS), the Lombok Strait and the Sunda Strait, Singapore cooperates closely with key stakeholders to uphold maritime security and freedom of navigation. To this end, Singapore remains fully committed to the following three principles, which have gained broad consensus amongst regional stakeholders.



- primary responsibility for the security of regional waterways lies with the littoral States;
- the international community, including major user States and bodies, like the IMO, have an important role to play;
- new cooperative measures should be developed in accordance with the 1982 UNCLOS and other international conventions. Singapore is also supportive of ASEAN's approach towards the maritime issues encapsulated in the Bali Concord II, signed in October 2003, which reiterates the transboundary nature of maritime issues and the need to address them in a holistic, integrated and comprehensive way.

These principles have translated into cooperative efforts at a regional level. Singapore is part of the Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP), a joint undertaking by the littoral States of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, to enhance maritime security in the SOMS. Since its inception in July 2004, the MSP has substantially reduced the incidence of piracy and armed robbery against ships occurring in the SOMS. The 14th MSP Joint Coordinating Committee was conducted from 15 to 16 January 2020, where members discussed possible measures to strengthen information-sharing and operational coordination to deter and disrupt sea robberies within their respective territorial waters in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

Apart from conducting air and sea patrols, Singapore also believes in enhancing maritime awareness and ensuring systematic and timely exchanges of information to keep sea lanes safe. In this regard, the Information Fusion Centre (IFC) established in 2009 seeks to advance inter-agency and international cooperation in maritime information-sharing through its linkages to operations centres and network of ILOs. Through partnerships and the pooling of various information-sharing and analytical systems in one location, the IFC is able to provide a platform for multinational information sharing and collaboration with regional and extra-regional partners by cuing operational responses to a wide range of maritime security issues, including piracy and armed robbery against ships, hijacking, search and rescue, weapons proliferation, human/arms trafficking, and smuggling. As of November 2021, the IFC has established operational linkages with international maritime centres, operational centres and agencies across 41 countries, and 18 ILOs have been accredited to the IFC from 18 different countries.³² The IFC also supports broader efforts to build regional capacity for maritime awareness, such as sharing best practices and conducting exercises, workshops and other training activities. For instance, the IFC organises the Regional Maritime Practitioners' Programme (RMPP) and hosts the Maritime Information Sharing Exercise (MARISX). The IFC is also the permanent secretariat for the ASEAN Navy Chiefs' Meeting.

Singapore is a founding member of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), the first intergovernmental initiative that promotes and enhances cooperation against piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. At present, 21 States are Contracting Parties to the ReCAAP.³³ Singapore has also been hosting the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) since its inception in 2006, and has renewed its commitment to host the ISC for another 5 years, from 2022 to 2027. Over the years, the ReCAAP ISC has established itself as a go-to authority on trends and analyses of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, and continues to play an instrumental role in disseminating timely and accurate information for governments and industry members alike.

³² The 19 countries are namely Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, the ROK, Thailand, the UK, the US, and Vietnam.

³³ The 21 countries are Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Denmark, Germany, India, Japan, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, the ROK, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the UK, the US, and Vietnam.



The ReCAAP ISC has collaborated with partner organisations and the industry to produce useful practice guides for the maritime community, such as the Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia in March 2021 and the Guidance on Abduction of Crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and Waters off Eastern Sabah in July 2019. The ReCAAP ISC has also supported numerous capacity building efforts to improve the capability of regional governments to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships in the region. The ReCAAP is held up as a successful model of regional cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships by the IMO and has inspired other similar initiatives, such as the Djibouti Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (GoA). In March

2021, the ReCAAP ISC commemorated its 15th Anniversary by organising a Symposium to reaffirm Contracting Parties' commitment to regional cooperation against piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, and to map out the future steps to enhance the ReCAAP ISC's relevance and standing as a Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing. The symposium was attended by ReCAAP ISC Governors and delegates from all 20 ReCAAP Contracting Parties, representatives from international organisations, the shipping industry, as well as academia and research institutes.

vi. ICTs Security

Cyber threats are a transboundary and cross-cutting challenge to all AMS. At the same time, cybersecurity is also a key enabler of economic progress, job creation and better living standards as AMS step up their digitalisation efforts.

Under Singapore's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2018, the first ever ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Cybersecurity Coordination was endorsed by Leaders to reaffirm ASEAN's commitment to a secure and resilient rules-based cyberspace. Since 2016, Singapore has also been hosting the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC), held on the side-lines of the Singapore International Cyber Week (SICW). At the 6th AMCC in 2021, participants noted and expressed appreciation that further progress has been made by Malaysia and Singapore in co-leading the development of the ASEAN Regional Action Plan (RAP) Matrix of Norms Implementation, to facilitate AMS in prioritising the implementation of the 11 norms based on their readiness and interest. Participants welcomed the update to ASEAN's strategy for cybersecurity cooperation, as laid out in the ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy 2021 – 2025, and are supportive of the initiatives within, such as the development of a CII protection framework, regional cybersecurity standards for IoT, and cybersecurity awareness programme for AMS, as well as enhanced coordination of cybersecurity and related digital security issues. The ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy 2021-2025 was eventually approved at ADGMIN 2022.

As set out in the 2018 ASEAN Leaders' Statement, Singapore worked closely with ASEAN to draft the initial proposal for better cybersecurity policy coordination in ASEAN. The proposal to establish an ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordinating Committee (ASEAN Cyber-CC) comprising representatives from relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies overseeing cybersecurity issue was considered at the ADGMIN in 2019. Its objective is to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination on cybersecurity while preserving the exclusive work domains of the sectoral bodies. The inaugural meeting of the ASEAN Cyber-CC was held on 5 November 2020. At the second ASEAN Cyber-CC meeting on 30 November 2021, the ASEAN RAP Matrix of Norms Implementation was endorsed. The RAP Matrix is a living document which can be further reviewed.

At the 10th ASEAN Network Security Action Council (ANSAC) Meeting and 2nd Telecommunications and IT Senior Officials-ASEAN Telecommunications Regulators' Council (TELSOM-ATRC) Leaders Retreat in August 2019 in Bangkok, the methods for the implementation of the ASEAN Computer Emergency Response Team (ASEAN CERT) was noted, and the scope of work for the ASEAN CERT was agreed on. Singapore was tasked to continue the study on its implementation model. With the endorsement of the ASEAN Regional CERT (ASEAN CERT) Implementation Paper at ADGMIN 2022, the next steps are to work out the Terms of Reference and financing details for the ASEAN CERT.

Singapore has also been convening an annual ASEAN CERT Incident Drill (ACID) for the last 16 years to strengthen the cybersecurity preparedness of AMS, reinforce regional coordination drills, and enhance regional cooperation.

In our capacity as the ASEAN Voluntary Lead Shepherd on Cybercrime, Singapore has been working closely with other AMS and key stakeholders, such as INTERPOL, to identify priority areas of common interest to harmonise ASEAN's competencies in combating cybercrime. Singapore has also organised training programmes and meetings for AMS to encourage information sharing and build a close network of cyber experts within the region. The initiatives proposed to combat cybercrime are in close alignment with the objectives in the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint 2025. On 28 November 2019, Singapore was formally appointed a permanent member of the INTERPOL Cybercrime Directors Workshop during the 10th edition of the Workshop. Members would convene twice a year to exchange operational information and experience in tackling various types of cybercrimes and cyber threats in the region. The 11th and 12th Cybercrime Directors Workshop took place on 23 April 2020 and 20 January 2021 respectively via video conference.

In order to bolster our regional efforts to effectively address the growing cybercrime threat, Singapore spearheaded the operationalisation of the ASEAN Cyber Capability Desk in the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI). Singapore secured unequivocal support from SOMTC and AMMTC on this initiative in 2017. With this endorsement and firm commitment



from Singapore and Brunei to second officers, INTERPOL launched the ASEAN Desk to focus on driving regional cybercrime operations on 25 July 2018. The ASEAN Cyber Capability Desk was renamed as the ASEAN Cybercrime Operations Desk (ASEAN Desk) in 2020 and currently has seconded officers from Singapore and Vietnam. In February 2021, the ASEAN Desk published its 2nd ASEAN Cyber Threat Assessment Report that provided analyses and insights on the latest cyberthreat landscape in ASEAN and highlighted strategies and the way forward for the region.

We have also contributed to other capacity and awareness building efforts. In conjunction with the Singapore International Cyber Week (SICW), the 3rd ASEAN Cybercrime Prosecutors' Roundtable Meeting (ACPRM) was organised in September 2019, to provide a platform for cybercrime prosecutors and law enforcement officers to share best practices and chart the way forward for better cooperation in this domain.

The Singapore Police Force (SPF) CyberCrime Command (CCC) has also organised several webinars/conferences on Cybercrime in 2021, as follows:

1) Webinar on Basic Cybercrime Investigation and Digital Evidence Handling

- On 17 August 2021, the SPF CCC organised the Webinar on Basic Cybercrime Investigation and Digital Evidence Handling. 69 participants from 41 INTERPOL member states took part in the half-day virtual webinar.
- During the webinar, the trainers from SPF CCC shared on investigation techniques relating to social media accounts, emails, networks, the darknet, as well as general guidelines on search and seizure of digital devices.

2) ASEAN Plus Three Cybercrime Conference (APTCC)

- The ASEAN Plus Three Cybercrime Conference (APTCC) provides a platform for ASEAN cybercrime agencies to take stock of new and emerging cybercrime threats in ASEAN and to exchange information with the Plus Three Dialogue Partners (People's Republic of China, Japan and Republic of Korea) on the latest prevention measures, law and regulatory policies; as well as best practices on cybercrime forensics and investigations to strengthen ASEAN's overall cybercrime response. The APTCC started as a workshop in 2016, followed by conferences in 2018 and 2019 respectively.
- On 22 July 2021, the SPF CCC organised the 4th APTCC. Held virtually, the theme of this year's conference was "Joining Hands, ASEAN and Beyond: Public-Private Partnership in Combatting Cybercrime". About 40 participants from the ASEAN Member States and Plus Three Dialogue Partners took part in the half-day virtual conference. The virtual conference saw speakers from private companies such as Trend Micro, Microsoft and TikTok share their insights on tackling cybercrime, as well as INTERPOL's ASEAN Cybercrime Operations Desk coming in to present the ASEAN Joint Operations Framework.

Alongside Malaysia and Japan, Singapore co-chaired the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ARF ISM on ICTs Security) from August 2018 to July 2021. The ARF ISM on ICTs Security and its Open-Ended Study Group (OESG) focuses on the adoption of CBMs to facilitate communication, information sharing as well as the exchange of know-how and best practices. In so doing, we can reduce the risk of cyber conflict, and build inter-country trust and confidence in cyberspace. Singapore hosted the 3rd ARF OESG in January 2019, and the 4th ARF OESG as well as the 2nd ARF ISM on ICTs Security meeting in March 2019.

In terms of capacity building, Singapore launched the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE) in October 2019 as an extension of the ASEAN Cyber Capacity Programme (ACCP) to move capacity building efforts forward in a coordinated manner. While the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the temporary suspension of in-person programmes, regional cyber capacity building efforts under the ASCCE have evolved and shifted to digital platforms. Through the online programmes, the ASCCE continues to maintain the momentum of cyber capacity building for ASEAN participants. The ASCCE Campus was officially opened during the 6th SICW in 2021. To date, the ASCCE has delivered more than 30 programmes attended by over 1,000 senior officials from ASEAN and beyond, and collaborated with over 40 partners from across governments, private sector, academia and NGOs.

Multilaterally, Singapore is also an active participant in key international cyber discussions on norms, rules, and principles, international law, capacity building, and CBMs. Singapore actively participated in and contributed to strengthening the rules-based multilateral order through these discussions, such as the 6th United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (UNGGE) on Advancing Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace in the Context of International Security and the inaugural Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, both of which were successfully concluded in 2021, as well as the OEWG on Security of and in the use of ICTs (2021 – 2025). Singapore strongly supports the OEWG process as it offers all UN Member States, big and small, an opportunity to engage in and enhance cyber cooperation, as well as to play a key role in the development of rules and norms in cyberspace to maintain international peace and security. Given Singapore's commitment to supporting the UN processes, which offer countries, big and small, an opportunity to play a key role in the development of international rules and norms in cyberspace, we are actively involved in the discussions at the 2nd UN OEWG on Security of and In the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (OEWG 2.0). Also, as Chair of OEWG 2.0, Singapore will play a constructive role in fostering consensus and facilitating discussions to build a peaceful, stable and secure cyberspace.

Within the defence sectoral, Singapore works closely with our partners to support and contribute to the ADMM-Plus EWG on CS, which is a platform for defence establishments from ASEAN

and Plus countries to enhance and institutionalise practical cooperation in cybersecurity. The ACICE is part of Singapore's efforts to deepen regional cooperation to enhance ASEAN's understanding of the potential threats to regional security arising from the cybersecurity and information domains.

As a co-sponsor of the Programme of Action (POA) Proposal for long-term institutional dialogue on cybersecurity issues at the UN, Singapore also looks forward to working with international partners to explore how the POA and OEWG can complement their work and build on the strong foundation of past GGE and OEWG consensus reports.

III. Role of ARF

Since its inception in 1994 as an open and inclusive forum to discuss key political and security issues, the ARF has evolved from Stage I Promotion of CBMs to Stage II Development of Preventive Diplomacy (PD) mechanisms. As the 2010 Hanoi Plan of Action (POA) to implement the ARF Vision Statement expired in 2020, ARF Participants developed a new POA (2020-2025), which will guide ARF's future progress in accordance with universally recognised norms and principles of international law. This is a timely initiative as the world grapples with the political, economic and social consequences of a global pandemic.

Against this backdrop, we should be prepared to face more complicated regional security challenges. More than ever, recovery and success would depend on greater confidence and trust among ARF Participants, fostering closer collaboration and candid dialogue, as well as responding collectively to the complex post-pandemic landscape. ASEAN will have to ensure our continued Centrality and unity through initiatives, including at the ARF, that assert our relevance. The regional architecture is constantly in flux and COVID-19 has intensified some centrifugal forces. The ARF must be vigilant and renew our value as an open and inclusive platform for engaging all friendly partners. To this end, Singapore remains fully committed to the ARF and its role as a key pillar in the multi-layered regional security architecture.

I. Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic persists for the third year, fueled by the Omicron variant. Milder health impacts and vaccination progress have allowed the Asia-Pacific region to remain more open than in previous waves, seeking to balance health precautions with the increasingly pressing need to reopen the economies. The Asian Development Bank predicted that the Gross Domestic Product in the region will expand by 5.2 percent in 2022 and 5.3 percent in 2023, based on continued recovery in domestic demand and solid exports.

The great-power rivalry in the region, however, poses geopolitical uncertainties and increasing risks of miscalculation and escalation, turning Southeast Asia into a major potential flashpoint. Reactivation and formation of security alliances further intensify competition between major powers. To make matters worse, the situation in Ukraine has heightened uncertainty and unsettled commodity markets. According to the World Bank, while the region's direct dependence on Russia and Ukraine for imports and exports of goods, services, and capitals, is limited, the situation and sanctions against Russia are likely to increase international prices of food and fuel, hurting consumers and growth. The conflict has exacerbated yet another global existential threat: food insecurity.

ASEAN, as a regional grouping comprising small and medium sized countries, has been able to work with major powers and play a central role in building strategic trust and confidence, focusing global efforts on socio-economic recovery in the post COVID-19 era.

Implementation of ASEAN's initiatives in response to COVID-19 offers an opportunity to enhance partnerships and forge closer cooperation with external partners. Positive and concrete developments include procuring COVID-19 vaccines through the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund; operationalisation of the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies; proposal to establish the APT Reserve; progress of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) implementation; and operationalisation of the ASEAN Travel Corridor.

More recently, the 15th ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting and Related Meetings made further advancement on the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) which aims to strengthen ASEAN's regional capacity to respond to future pandemics. Thailand will host the ACPHEED Secretariat and also serve as a Facilitating Office for the "Response" pillar, while Viet Nam for "Prevention" and Indonesia for "Detection" pillars respectively.

On Thailand's part, the Royal Thai Government seeks to pursue and balance actions that protect people's lives and livelihoods and is more actively focused on transitioning from a pandemic



to a post-pandemic, or endemic stage of COVID-19 since the beginning of June this year. All sectors are encouraged to continue adjusting with the country's gradual reopening by applying the twin policies of "smart control and living with COVID-19" and "universal prevention and universal vaccination".

The Government continues to promote a whole-of-society approach to overcome this pandemic. More than one million village health volunteers nationwide remain a strong force while the private sector will collaborate on efforts to tackle the outbreak and boost economic recovery, through vaccine distribution and logistics, communications and extra vaccine procurement. The Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model, or the BCG Model, is adopted as Thailand's national agenda and will be the main strategy for economic recovery and development for the post-COVID era.

1. ASEAN Centrality in the Evolving Regional Architecture

The COVID-19 crisis together with major powers rivalries and multiple shocks in the global economy offer ASEAN an opportunity to recalibrate the ASEAN-centred regional architecture. The strengthening of such architecture is supported by shared norms and principles of international law, as enshrined in key instruments such as the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations, among others. With wider recognition of its governing principles in inter-state relations in response to security challenges in the uncertain geopolitical environment, the TAC has become ever more relevant. Reinforcing the TAC and its principles will strengthen regional norms and the promotion of peace and stability.

The long-term goal is to realise a strategic new equilibrium that will be conducive to peace, security and prosperity for all in the Asia-Pacific region, from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean. The 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok in November 2019 adopted the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) which is "ASEAN's Vista" on the evolving regional geo-strategic landscape anchored on existing norms and principles including those enshrined in the TAC, and on engagement with its dialogue partners. It aims to promote win-win cooperation in areas that are mutually beneficial, based on the principle of inclusiveness and the 3Ms: Mutual Trust, Mutual Respect, and Mutual Benefit.

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

II. Regional Security Environment

Asia-Pacific's strategic landscape has become more volatile as a result of more intense competition amongst various states in order to gain geo-strategic advantages in the region. Geopolitical uncertainties and confrontations could potentially affect regional peace and security as well as undermine prosperity in the region, especially efforts to recover from COVID-19 and attain long-term sustainable growth.

Additionally, the region is also encountering various challenges that could potentially affect regional peace and stability as well as hinder our economic progress. Disputes emanating from historical roots or in relation to border issues are likely to reemerge, which pose risks for regional instability and growing tension among countries. In addition, non-traditional security issues, namely; transnational crimes, terrorism and violent extremism, cyber attacks, maritime security as well as health security, in particular the adverse effects from the COVID-19 pandemic, have brought new challenges and posed threats to our security landscape.

On the South China Sea, growing tensions and provocative incidents have undermined the positive momentum gained in 2019, including the completion of the first reading of the Single Draft Negotiating Text (SDNT) of the Code of Conduct (COC). Strategic trust should be nurtured through practical confidence-building measures and continued dialogue. In this regard, the Paper on “Best Practices and Non-Binding Guidelines for Cooperative Activities on Marine Environmental Protection in the South China Sea”, which ASEAN and China's Foreign Ministers took note on 9 September 2020, signals a positive development for a win-win cooperation which will ultimately transform the South China Sea into a Sea of Peace, Stability, and Sustainable Development. The ongoing step-by-step resumption of COC negotiations through the ASEAN-China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (JWG on DOC) is welcomed and an important step forward.

Meanwhile, all parties concerned should exercise self-restraint to create an environment conducive to the peaceful resolution of disputes, consistent with international law, including 1982 UNCLOS. As the year 2022 marks the 20th anniversary of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), it is pertinent to pursue full and effective implementation of the DOC and properly implement its measures, thus enhancing trust and confidence as well as ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea.

In the maritime domain, maritime security and cooperation have assumed greater importance for Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Therefore, challenges that would compromise safety and security of Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) need to be addressed effectively. Other increasingly crucial maritime issues, such as marine resources management, including combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Fishing), transnational crime at sea, piracy and armed robbery, people smuggling and wildlife smuggling also require closer cooperation. To complement these efforts, practical cooperation, maritime domain awareness (MDA), information sharing and intelligence exchange must also be enhanced.



The region continues to be vulnerable to the threats and exploitation of transnational organised crime groups, including trafficking in persons and people smuggling, irregular migration and particularly illicit drug trafficking. Illicit drug markets in the region have expanded and diversified and appeared to be largely unaffected by the pandemic outbreak. This landscape requires ASEAN to enhance its border management cooperation through enhanced coordination in all aspects, from information sharing and intelligence exchange, implementing appropriate measures to ensure safety and security from land, air and sea border challenges, to catalysing joint action to help address multifaceted dimensions of transnational crime. Nevertheless, there is a need to ensure a balanced approach between safety and security, including health security, and cross-border trade facilitation and the seamless movement of goods and people.

The ever increasing digital connectivity worldwide has been accompanied by trends where the use of ICTs for criminal purposes has become more intensified, sophisticated and less preventable. According to the UNODC, the increased digitalisation of society, compounded by the COVID-19 outbreak, has contributed to a recent 600 percent rise in cybercrimes in Southeast Asia. The criminals target not only individuals, but increasingly focus on critical national infrastructure and business of all sizes in both private and public sectors.

The establishment of ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordinating Committee (ASEAN Cyber-CC) and the two ASEAN Cyber-CC meetings in November 2020, and in 2021 respectively, reflected the importance of strengthening cross-sectoral regional coordination on cybersecurity, including through the implementation of a list of voluntary, practical norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace to promote an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment. Equally important is cybersecurity training and capacity building, and this is where the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) plays an important catalytic role to enhance the capacity of cybersecurity experts and specialists in the region.

In spite of the declining regional trend of terrorist attacks due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic, terrorist groups are likely to resume their activities and strengthen their organisations once the situation has improved. Meanwhile, the use of social media and online platforms to disseminate violent extremism and racism to the public have drastically increased along with growing risks of potential lone-wolf terrorist attacks. In 2021, there are still threats of local terrorist groups, especially those associated with the Islamic State (IS).

The situation on the Korean Peninsula remains a pressing security issue in the region. On 4 February 2022, ASEAN Foreign Ministers issued a statement entitled “The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) Missile Tests” expressing grave concerns over the continued ballistic missile tests conducted by the DPRK, which may escalate tensions and threaten regional peace and stability. The said statement also called on the DPRK to fully comply with all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, taking into account the international community’s calls for diplomacy, and reaffirmed ASEAN’s readiness to play a constructive role, including through utilising ASEAN-led platform such as the ARF, to promote a conducive atmosphere for peaceful dialogue amongst concerned parties to bring about a complete, verifiable, irreversible,



and peaceful denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. On 10 June 2022, ASEAN Foreign Ministers also issued a statement entitled “The Recent Surge of Missile Testing on the Korean Peninsula” expressing grave concerns over the recent surge in DPRK’s Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) testing and ballistic missile launches. Said statement urged the DPRK to exercise self-restraint and reiterated ASEAN’s call to the DPRK to fully comply with all relevant UNSC resolutions and ASEAN’s readiness to utilise ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ARF to play a constructive role to de-escalate tension to bring about a complete, verifiable, irreversible, and peaceful denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

On 17 February 2022, ASEAN Foreign Ministers also issued a statement welcoming the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapons States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Race. The Statement reflects Thailand’s firm belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only way to guarantee against its use and threat of use.

The situation in Myanmar has highlighted the important role played by ASEAN in contributing constructively to bring about de-escalation and pave way towards peaceful resolution and the return to normalcy. The ASEAN Leaders’ Meeting in Jakarta on 24 April 2021 is a testament to the important role of ASEAN on this issue. The Five-Point Consensus (5PC) forms a basis for ASEAN’s constructive engagement with Myanmar and must be implemented in a timely and concrete manner, particularly the cessation of violence and the provision of humanitarian assistance. The situation in Myanmar is complex with long historical context, thus, the process which will resolve the situation requires step-by-step approach and most importantly, confidence-building. It is important to also ensure that the process will be as inclusive as possible to reflect the diverse voices of the Myanmar society. Thailand remains committed to the implementation of the 5PC and fully supports the role of the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair to this end.

Finally, the escalation of hostilities and the use of military force in Ukraine has led to the loss of lives and destruction of property and civilian infrastructure. The current humanitarian situation in Ukraine and humanitarian consequences of the crisis are of grave concerns. The adverse ramification of the situation, including food insecurity, energy crisis, and displaced refugees, is severely felt by the Asia-Pacific region. All relevant parties must cease all hostilities and violence as well as to exercise utmost restraint. Diplomatic means must be fully exhausted to find a peaceful settlement through dialogue. Moreover, it is important to support the proposal of the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) to establish effective humanitarian corridors to guarantee safe passage for people and the needed supplies. ASEAN Foreign Ministers have issued three statements regarding the situation in Ukraine, with the latest one dated 8 April 2022 expressing deepest condolences to the people of Ukraine and support the UNSG’s call for an independent investigation of all alleged atrocities against innocent civilians, including in Bucha.



III. National Security and Defence Policy

1. Overview of National Security and Defence Policy

In relation to Thailand's national security and defence policy, the Ministry of Defence has published its policy statement in an effort to promote transparency and enhance trust and confidence between Thailand and ASEAN Member States, as well as other partners within and beyond the Asia-Pacific. The mission of the Ministry of Defence covers wide range of issues including, amongst others, enhancing defence cooperation with neighbouring nations, ASEAN Member States and international organisations, both at bilateral and multilateral levels, enhancing the integration of strengths and capabilities with every sector, maintaining capability of the armed forces and national defence system, increasing armed forces capability in order to counter non-traditional threats and strengthening defence industry.

In addition, the Ministry of Defence attaches great importance to participation in cooperation frameworks which will provide opportunities for the armed forces of the region to engage in practical cooperation to promote mutual interest of participating countries and enhance capabilities for the future. The activities of the ADMM's initiatives and the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups include the enhancement of defence establishments' role in supporting border management to collectively respond to transnational challenges, and strengthening maritime security cooperation to build trust and confidence as well as practical cooperation in the maritime domain of the region.

The ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM), a subsidiary body under the ADMM, has contributed to the region's humanitarian assistance and disaster relief frameworks as well as complemented the work of the ASEAN Coordination Centre of Humanitarian Management (AHA Centre) in improving the region's response and coordination mechanism. During the COVID-19 outbreak, the ACMM has played an active role in monitoring and responding to the situation. The important implementing plan of ACMM in 2022 includes:

1. The meeting on Medical Support for Peace Operation on 14-18 March 2022,
 2. The meeting on Custom Immigration Quarantine for Military Medicine Force on 13-17 June 2022,
 3. The meeting on Military Medicine for Maritime Operations on 21-25 November 2022.
- Furthermore, on 7 February 2022, the representatives of the Ministry of Defence participated in the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Working Group (ADSOM WG) in Phnom Penh and proposed the Agreement of the Establishment of ACMM, which is currently opening for inputs from ASEAN Member States.

2. National Contribution to Regional Security

a. Joint Exercise

Cobra Gold is one of the largest multinational exercises in the Asia-Pacific region which has been held annually in Thailand since 1982. It is known to be one of the largest theater security



cooperation exercises in the Asia-Pacific region which aims to strengthen military ties, and improve capabilities and interoperability of participating countries. The 41st iteration of the Cobra Gold theater exercises took place during 20 February - 5 March 2022, providing a training for 3,450 participants from 9 countries namely Thailand, the United States, Singapore, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, China, India and Australia. The training aimed for a military planning in enforcing peace by using military forces, including the training to support non-traditional security namely humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and cyber security. The training course was comprised of training on command, individual's assistance project namely construction project and table top exercise, and physical training.

b. Peacekeeping

Thailand has been a steadfast troop-contributing country to UN peacekeeping missions since 1950. Over 27,000 Thai military and police personnel, men and women, have served in more than 20 peacekeeping and related missions of the UN. At present, Thailand contributes an engineering company of 272 personnel to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as well as military and police officers to three UN peacekeeping missions, namely UNAMID in Darfur, UNMOGIP in India and Pakistan, and UNMISS in South Sudan. Thailand has also been consistently deploying female military and police officers to UN peacekeeping missions worldwide. In 2022, 10 female military and police officers are being deployed in two UN peacekeeping Missions, namely UNMOGIP in India and Pakistan and UNMISS in South Sudan. Recently, 5 female police officers passed the Selection Assistance and Assessment Team (SAAT), which was held in Thailand during 18-24 December 2021.

As part of UNMISS, the Thai Horizontal Military Engineering Company (HMEC)'s main responsibilities include road reconstruction and building infrastructure. Thai peacekeepers also endeavour to promote development initiatives and the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) initiated by His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great to assist in achieving sustained peace which complements Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peaceful and inclusive societies, justice and accountable institutions. Previous missions in Timor Leste and Darfur were a case in point where SEP was successfully applied.

The Peace Operations Center (POC) of the Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTARF) has collaborated with other countries in exchanging trainers and instructors, and providing training courses, namely:

1. UN Staff Officers Course (UNSOC)
2. Child Protection Course for both Thai and foreign officers. In 2021, POC planned to promote the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda by increasing participation of female peacekeepers in the 3rd Rotation THAI HMEC, implementing the UN Triangular Partnership Project 2022-2023, and enhancing cooperation on capacity building and joint training. In addition, the POC plans to establish a Centre of Excellence on peacekeeping in ASEAN aimed to deploy ASEAN Peacekeeping Force in UN peacekeeping operation.



As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for the term 2021-2022, Thailand has actively helped facilitate and bridge gaps amongst relevant UN agencies, support enhancing role of ECOSOC in promoting peace as well as contribute 100,000 USD to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), reaffirming Thailand's commitment to sustaining peacebuilding efforts.

Regarding the WPS agenda, Thailand developed National Measures and Guidelines on WPS 2017-2021 and propelled in action through the establishment of Children and Women Coordinating Center in Southern Thailand. Moreover, Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security is developing the Draft Action Plan on WPS for Fiscal Year 2021-2025. The important measures of the Action Plan include prevention, protection and recovery, capacity building and empowerment and participation.

c. Counter-terrorism

The improvement of COVID-19 pandemic situation, the exploitation of cyberspace by terrorist groups for propaganda and recruitment, and the volatile situation in certain regions, especially in Afghanistan, have contributed to the rebounding of global and regional terrorist threat. Therefore, the international community should prepare for and remain vigilant to such circumstances.

The number of terrorist incidents in Southeast Asia in 2021 declined due to the continued efforts of authorities in pursuing their operations and law enforcements. However, there are still threats of local terrorist groups, especially those associated with the Islamic State (IS) /Daesh. In addition, there is also a growing concern of reconnection of networks between local and global terrorists after the ease of travel restrictions and re-opening of borders as well as the resurgence of global terrorist groups, namely IS and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Issues to be monitored and properly addressed include:

1. threat from IS-associated groups in the region
2. movement of international terrorists after the ease of travel restrictions
3. repatriation or relocation of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs)
4. reconnection of terrorist networks
5. act of terrorism by lone actors, wolf packs, and radicalised women and youth, and
6. spread of violent extremism via social media platforms.

It is crucial to undertake a comprehensive and sustainable solution to terrorism by addressing root causes through soft and hard approaches in a balanced and holistic manner; encouraging international cooperation; and promoting interfaith dialogues and values of moderation and peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies.

Thailand has ratified 12 out of 19 existing conventions and protocols related to counter terrorism under the UN framework. Thailand also supports the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and enact its 5-year National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2017-2022) of which the concepts of prevention, response, and rehabilitation are core approaches.

At present, Thailand is in the process of finalising the draft Guideline on the Prevention and Countering Violence Extremism which promotes the integration of efforts between government agencies and stakeholders to address the issues of violence extremism in a comprehensive manner.

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

Thailand upholds the policy not to develop, acquire or proliferate any kind of WMD and their means of delivery, as well as fully observes commitments and obligations on non-proliferation of WMD.

On nuclear disarmament, as one of the first three countries to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 20 September 2017, Thailand welcomes the entry into force of the TPNW on 22 January 2021, which marks a historic milestone and the triumph of multilateralism. Given that 89 states have signed the TPNW and 61 states are parties to the Treaty at the time of writing, it is crucial to promote further ratification and accession to the TPNW, so as to achieve inclusiveness and universality of the Treaty. At the same time, Thailand reaffirms the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone for nuclear non-proliferation and recognises the complementarity between the TPNW and the NPT, as both share the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Notably, the TPNW is fully in line with the obligations on nuclear disarmament under the Article VI of the NPT, which requires States to pursue negotiation in good faith on general and complete disarmament.

In this regard, Thailand participated actively in the First Meeting of the State Parties to the Treaty that took place on 21-23 June 2022 in Vienna as well as the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT to be held on 1-26 August 2022 in New York.

With the Nuclear Energy for Peace Act enacted in February 2017, Thailand is pursuing ratification and accession to all relevant nuclear non-proliferation treaties and conventions. Most recently, Thailand has ratified the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) on 2 May 2019.

At the regional level, Thailand played a leading role in the establishment and the implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) or the Bangkok Treaty of 1995, and in initiating the cooperation of the ASEAN Network of regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM). Thailand is committed to supporting and advancing both initiatives, including with the Nuclear Weapon States on the signing of the SEANWFZ Protocol and with ASEAN Member States and friends on cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, as its contribution to promote ASEAN non-proliferation efforts.

On 5 April 2022, Thailand hosted and co-chaired the 13th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) with the United States and Sri Lanka.



The meeting offered an opportunity for the ARF to serve as an inclusive platform to constructively discuss pressing regional and international issues and promote a conducive atmosphere for dialogue. The focused discussion covered the three priority areas of the ARF NPD Work Plan, namely Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy.

Thailand welcomes the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament under the 'Securing Our Common Future' concept and its three outlined priorities on the control and disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and remaining vigilant of new and emerging technologies and their effects on peace and security. In this connection, Thailand looks forward to tangible cooperation and meaningful engagement between all UN agencies, Member States, and other stakeholders in realising this Agenda. Thailand stands ready to facilitate the exchange of views and best practices on disarmament and non-proliferation issues and will continue to act as a bridge-builder between ASEAN and other regional and international groupings to bring about a safer and more secure world.

e. Transnational Crime

The Asia-Pacific Region continues to face threats posed by transnational organised crime groups who exploit higher degree of global and regional connectivity. The ease of travel restrictions, re-opening of borders and the impacts of recent economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic are key factors luring more people to enter into transnational crime, especially drug trafficking networks which still remain highly active in the region. Other illegal activities such as people smuggling, human trafficking, illicit wildlife and timber trafficking continue to pose potential threats in Thailand and countries in the region.

The National Strategy to Prevent and Combat Transnational Organised Crimes still plays a central role in Thailand efforts to combat transnational crimes. In addition, domestic laws addressing organised crime, money laundering, human trafficking, and cybercrime also serve as policy guidelines and frameworks for Thailand's relevant security agencies.

Thailand is of a firm belief that the "ASEAN Border Management Cooperation Roadmap", adopted at the 15th AMMTC on 29th September 2021, will help lay an important groundwork in advancing cooperation on border management as well as addressing transnational crime in ASEAN as reflected in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 with the ultimate goal being the establishment of an ASEAN-wide border management cooperation arrangement to ensure border security and facilitate trade in tandem.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic, Thailand continued to be resolute in carrying out the national agenda of zero tolerance towards human trafficking, which was adopted since 2014. In 2021, the Government had allocated more budget for preventing and suppressing human trafficking, increasing by 10.69 percent from 2020. Thailand also attaches great importance to ensure the safety and protection of victims and implementing preventive measures to protect various vulnerable groups from human trafficking. Thailand provides



assistance and protection of all victims of trafficking in accordance with Thai laws and victim-centred and trauma-informed approaches. These have included improving services in the shelters, introducing the mobile application “PROTECT-U” to increase access to protection and assistance, providing legal assistance in shelters, providing capacity-building training for shelter staff members, and providing protection and assistance for LGBTQI victims. As countries slowly reopen with severe socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 putting more people in poverty, we must redouble our efforts to combat trafficking in persons and protect the at-risk population.

As a country of transit and destination for irregular migration, Thailand has been affected by mass influx of irregular migrants from within and outside the region. Although Thailand is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Thailand has long been committed to humanitarian cause and will continue to work closely with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Illicit drug trafficking remains a grave challenge for ASEAN due to an increase in opium cultivation, heroin production and methamphetamine tablets and crystalline methamphetamine manufacturing in the Golden Triangle. Thailand is therefore fully committed to implementing the 4-year Mekong Drug Control Joint Operation Plan (2019-2022), in collaboration with Lao PDR, Myanmar, Cambodia, Viet Nam and China. The Plan is a continuation of the Safe Mekong Operation launched in 2015, aimed to comprehensively address illicit drug production and distribution in the Golden Triangle area. Thailand also hosts Safe Mekong Coordination Center (SMCC) in Chiang Mai and together with Australia established the “Taskforce Storm” in 2016 to oversee joint operations in suppressing illicit drug trafficking, money laundering and transnational crimes. This Taskforce has succeeded in arresting several drug syndicate criminals and seizing their proceeds of crime. As a lead shepherd for illicit drug trafficking, under the SOMTC, Thailand will continue to promote cooperation and activities in a concerted manner according to the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle 2020-2022.

In 2019, Thailand enacted two laws to support Thailand’s digital economy, namely Cybersecurity Act B.E.2562, leading to establishment of the National Cybersecurity Committee (NCSC) and other frameworks to prevent and respond to cyber threats against Critical Information Infrastructures (CIIs), and Personal Data Protection Act B.E 2562, aimed to standardise mechanisms and supervisory measures to protect online personal information both in the government and private sector. At present, the NCSA is finalising a new 5-year National Policy and Plan on Cybersecurity (2023-2027) to succeed the current National Cybersecurity Strategy (2017-2022). The new Policy will comprise 4 strategic goals, namely enhancing government agencies’ cyber capabilities, strengthening CIIs protection and resilience, deepening collaboration with stakeholders, and incubating knowledge and technology.

The region has been increasingly interconnected due to the digital transformation accelerated by the spread of the COVID-19. The connectivity in cyberspace comes at a price to public safety.



It is imperative for ASEAN to enhance cyber capabilities and strengthen common understanding to reduce cyber risks. On this note, Thailand welcomes the adoption of Regional Action Plan on the Implementation of UNGGE Norms of Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace (Cyber Norms) at the 2nd ASEAN Cyber-CC in 2021, and the launch of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy 2021-2025 at the 2nd ADGMIN in 2022. This reflects opportunities for ASEAN to synergise efforts on cybersecurity cooperation across frameworks.

The ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) has continued to serve as a training centre for authorities and information infrastructure operators in ASEAN on three issues: Cyber Defence Exercise with Recurrence (CYDER), digital forensics and malware analysis. As of February 2022, the AJCCBC has organised 19 training courses, including 9 online courses since the COVID-19 outbreak. The Centre has held 14 technical training sessions and four Cyber SEA Games in which the 4th Cyber SEA Game was held online due to the COVID-19. In addition to its main activities, the Centre also organised the Threat-Hunting Exercise and Exercise for SOC Analysts, sponsored by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications: MIC for 44 ASEAN professionals, and the Online Self-learning Course on Establishing a CSIRT and Cybersecurity Awareness for 135 ASEAN professionals. Under 3rd Party Collaboration, the Center hosted the Secure Provision training course with the Government of Switzerland during 14-15 March 2022. The Center also plan to host on CSET training course with Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) with the United States.

f. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and its newly adopted Work Programme 2021-2025 form the basis for cooperation amongst ASEAN Member States to prepare and respond to disaster emergencies in a concerted manner. The signing of the “ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response” in 2016 confirms that AADMER is the common platform for the Declaration. Thailand, as a Party to the AADMER and a member of the Governing Board of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), will continue to strengthen ASEAN’s efforts in the area of disaster management and reaffirm its support to an active role of the ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) and other ASEAN tools to deal with HADR challenges.

As the current Chair of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM), Thailand will further enhance ASEAN’s efforts in disaster prevention and mitigation. The overarching theme of Thailand’s chairmanship is “BALANCING ACT” which comprises accelerating the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme 2021-2025, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and Bangkok Principles, taking public health emergency, gender and inclusion, localisation, and climate action into account. Thailand plans to host the 40th ACDM on 21-24 June 2022 via videoconference and the 41st ACDM and 10th AMMDM and Related Meetings during 18-21 October 2022 in Thailand. During the 41st ACDM, the Framework on Anticipatory Action in Disaster Management is expected to be launched.

Thailand supports regional efforts to enhance capacity in disaster response and disaster management in line with the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Disaster Health Management, adopted at the 31st ASEAN Summit in Manila. The Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA) launched on 7 December 2012 is a key mechanism to allow for swift provision of relief items to ASEAN Member States facing post-disaster emergency situations. DELSA's establishment and operations have been supported by the Government of Japan, while the AHA Centre works closely with WFP - UNHRD on logistics technical aspects.

During the 34th ASEAN Summit in June 2019, Thailand by the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation officially launched the DELSA Satellite Warehouse in Chai Nat Province. The Warehouse serves as a stockpile during emergencies in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam and Thailand. Recently, the Warehouse delivered 2,900 Personal Hygiene Kits to support COVID-19 response in Cambodia in 2020 as well as 500 family tents, 2,000 mosquito nets, and 1,500 personal hygiene kits to Thailand in 2021. Further, the stockpile of relief materials from the Warehouse has been deployed to affected communities in Myanmar.

g. Maritime Security and Cooperation

The Asia-Pacific region continues to face maritime security challenges, including piracy, armed robbery against ships and various forms of transnational crime as well as issues related to marine environment and IUU fishing. An increase in the number of incidents in 2021 in comparison to 2020 reflects that piracy and armed robbery against ships remains a prevailing security concern. Such incidents are the result of active criminal activities in several areas and vulnerability of important sea lines of communication, notably the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, which connect two major waterways, namely, the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. Tensions between regional powers also pose challenges to international trade and maritime connectivity.

Given the complex and wide-ranging nature of maritime security issues, Thailand enacted the Maritime National Interests Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) to promote better coordination and consolidate responses to deal with emerging threats. Under the Act, Thai Maritime Enforcement Coordinating Center has been upgraded to become Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Center (THAI-MECC) with augmented role and greater authority in managing maritime security-related affairs. The Center participated in the National Crisis Management Exercise 2020 (C-MEX 20) to articulate understanding amongst relevant agencies in preparation for interception of WMD, addressing water pollution, and tackling IUU fishing. Since October 2019, THAI-MECC has joined efforts on COVID-19 prevention and control in maritime transport, including through National Single Windows (NSW) for reporting formalities from ships arriving in and/or departing from ports.

Thailand has participated in regional efforts such as the Malacca Straits Coordinated Patrols since 2008, the air patrol "Eyes in the Sky" since 2009, as well as the secondment of rotating officers to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery



against Ships in Asia Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC). Moreover, Thailand has actively taken part in regional maritime security and cooperation fora such as the EAS, the ADMM-Plus which Thailand is currently co-chairing with the United States the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Maritime Security (EWG on MS) under the theme "Strengthening Maritime Security Cooperation for Sustainable Development of ASEAN Member States' Economies", the ARF, the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and the Expanded AMF (EAMF) with a view to paving the way towards substantive cooperation, particularly in the areas of capacity building, maritime domain awareness and maritime connectivity.

Under the ADMM-Plus EWG on MS, Thailand hosted the 16th ADMM-Plus EWG on MS on 11 February 2022 via videoconference to review progress of the current Work Plan, provide an update on the region's maritime security environment, further discuss the Roadmap and exchange views on sustainable Blue Economy development. Two upcoming activities were discussed:

1. Table-Top Exercise on Maritime Security Exercise for Sustainable Blue Economy Development to be held in 2023 and
2. Future Leaders' Programme which Thailand plans to host in 2022 as to build network amongst young officers and defence officials within the ADMM-Plus community.

Thailand has embarked on a comprehensive reform of the fishery sector, resulting in the European Union's lifting of a yellow card for import ban of seafood products from Thailand in 2019. Building on such success, the ASEAN Network for Combating IUU Fishing (AN-IUU) was established in 2020 with Thailand as the host country and coordinator of the AN-IUU Network Centre and the AN-IUU Interactive Platform. Thailand hosted and co-hosted a number of meetings, including the 1st Meeting of the AN-IUU Focal Point in December 2020 via videoconference, and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd ASEAN Meeting on Combatting IUU Fishing in Partnership with the EU virtually in 2019 and 2021. At the 3rd Meeting, Thailand was tasked to take lead in developing the Guideline on sharing, access to, and use of IUU fishing related information. The 2nd Meeting of the AN-IUU Focal Point in February 2022 discussed the draft Guideline which will be considered by the ASEAN Sectoral on Working Group Fisheries in June this year. Thailand looks forward to the completion of the Guideline, which will assist the operationalisation of the AN-IUU interactive platform significantly.

Thailand has remained committed to promoting marine environmental protection, particularly on marine debris issue. Following the adoption of the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris (ASEAN RAP) at the Meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment on 1 March 2021, Thailand by the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources sought approval for the ASEAN RAP from the National Policy and Plan Committee on Marine and Coastal Resource Management on 5 April 2021. The ASEAN RAP will be further submitted for Cabinet's approval prior to seeking ad referendum approval from ASEAN Ministers on Environment. Thailand will co-chair with the United States and China the "ARF Seminar on Marine Debris – Solid Waste Management and Scalable Solutions" to raise awareness on components of developing, financing, and implementing solid waste management plans, and share best practices and case studies on scalable solutions to address regional marine debris challenges.



At the national level, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has developed a Roadmap “Plastic Waste Management 2018-2030” as a policy framework for the national plastic waste management. The Roadmap’s main objective involves strengthening collaboration amongst all stakeholders in preventing and addressing plastic waste problem in an integrated manner to reduce and stop using certain types of plastic, such as plastic wrapping and water bottle lid within 2019 and plastic bag, Styrofoam container, plastic cup, and plastic straw within 2022. Several activities under marine debris management project have also been organised, such as “Everyday Say No to Plastic Bags” campaign in cooperation with private sector to end distribution of single-use plastic bags by department and convenience stores.

IV. Role of the ARF

National contributions to enhance the ARF and regional security

The ever-challenging global situation has provided an opportunity for the ARF to demonstrate its relevance and efficiency as a primary forum for constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues in the Asia-Pacific region. The newly adopted Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) (HPoA II) at the 27th ARF in 2020 covers a period of 5 years, unlike the previous PoA which covered 10 years. Thailand has therefore spared no efforts in actively implementing the HPoA II and related Work Plans of each Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM). Further, Thailand has followed the Guide to ASEAN Regional Forum Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocol, approved at the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting, in conducting ARF initiatives and activities.

As for the inter-sessional year 2021-2022, Thailand hosted and co-chaired the 13th ARF ISM on NPD and co-chair the following activities in accordance with ARF’s purposes and principles:

3. ARF Workshop on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes, co-chaired with Russia and China, on 15-16 March 2022 via videoconference
4. 4th ARF Workshop on Ferry Safety, co-chaired with China, on 6-7 July 2022 via videoconference and will host
5. ARF Seminar on Marine Debris – Solid Waste Management and Scalable Solutions, co-chaired with the United States and China, via videoconference later this year.

III. Future of the ARF

With the diverse expertise of the Participants, the ARF can serve as an inclusive platform for concrete and practical cooperation on issues affecting regional security, ranging from public health emergencies, cybersecurity, maritime security, transnational crime, terrorism, and disaster relief. In the past year, despite the pandemic, it has been encouraging that Participants delivered on activities, expressed high interest in undertaking co-chairmanship of ISMs, proposed new concrete activities, and developed new ISMs Work Plans. It is even more encouraging that there has been progress on issues which Participants may have divergent views, but able to discuss and seek practical way forward by consensus, making progress at a pace comfortable to all.



The HPoA II comprises shorter implementation period than the first PoA which on the one hand, allows ARF Participants to be adaptable to emerging challenges. On the other hand, it requires Participants to be more focused and effective in its implementation. Utilising the work of national and regional think tanks as well as ARF Experts and Eminent Persons is underscored in the HPoA II. Engaging and networking directly with other actors such as Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), and ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS), including regional and international organisations, and listening to voices that embody diversity and inclusivity will help advance the HPoA II implementation as well as enhance the ARF's relevance.

In realising the ARF's full potential and objective, greater attention should be given to reviewing the ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy adopted in 2011, with a view to identify gaps and challenges in moving the ARF process forward from Stage I - Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) to Stage II – Preventive Diplomacy (PD), as well as enable a more efficient and effective policy response to emerging challenges. It is imperative to increase the capacity and capabilities of the ARF in the area of PD which includes helping prevent disputes and conflicts from arising between states and minimise the impact of such disputes and conflicts on the region. PD measures/mechanisms must be subject to a step-by-step approach, non-coercive, voluntary and conducted in accordance with universally recognised norms and principles of international law, and inter alia, in line with the UN Charter and the TAC.

Moving forward, the ARF needs to continue positioning and revitalising itself to address emerging challenges in a holistic manner. A novel idea should be explored so that the ARF can truly serve as a platform for constructive dialogues on security issues affecting the region. Maintaining the ARF relevance and significance as an action-oriented forum is also imperative. In this regard, the ARF needs to enable its work to be synergised with other ASEAN-led mechanisms such as ADMM-Plus and the EAS, as well as to promote cooperation with other regional and international bodies such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). In so doing, the ARF will remain relevant and credible in bringing regional players and stakeholders together in constructive dialogues and security cooperation in the region.



TIMOR-LESTE

The ARF Annual Security Outlook (ASO) 2022 is an important venue for exchange of views to enhance mutual understanding and trust among countries in the region and beyond. Timor-Leste's contribution to the ARF Security Outlook of 2022 reflects Timor-Leste's strong commitment and determination to develop constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interests and concerns in this region. Timor-Leste believes that promoting greater transparency, confidence and understanding of regional security and defense policies and security perceptions is the sine qua non for achieving a stable, peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific Region.

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The current regional security environment remains unpredictable and fragile as tension is growing in the region and beyond. Though there are no open inter-states conflicts or escalation occurred in the region but tensions are high as geopolitical competition between powers is intensified in the region. It is evident that the existing conflicts in the region are contained at intra-state level and diplomacy and regional mechanisms are applied to mitigate the conflicts as in case of Myanmar crisis. On the other hand, the security environment is still fragile caused by external major forces which have played major role in shaping the geopolitical dynamics in the region. South China Sea and Korean Peninsula issues have been the dominant topic in the regional security agenda for long period of time but no assurance is secured for an everlasting solution. While these regional issues remain unsolved and continue to attract regional and global attentions, the worst still to come to exacerbate the regional security environment through the escalation and spillovers from the Ukraine – Russia war.

1. Ukraine – Russia war

The security agenda of Asia-Pacific has been predominantly preoccupied with the escalation and spillover effects of the Ukraine – Russia war. Though the Asia-Pacific nations are not directly exposed to the war but the ramifications of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis may have gone far beyond the impact on Europe. Therefore, countries of the region should analyze the geopolitical and other implications of the conflict and adjust their policies accordingly.

In response and to be consistent with the principles of mutual respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and equal rights of all nations, Timor-Leste's National Parliament has approved a draft resolution to condemn the aggression of Ukraine and declared their full support for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of that country, in accordance with its internationally recognized borders. Timor-Leste has joined the international community and the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) to call on Russia to immediately cease the use of force against Ukraine and withdraw its military forces from Ukraine.

As a nation that came back from the ashes of forced occupation, Timor-Leste recognized that war brings benefits to no one. Timor-Leste, therefore, urges all parties to the conflict to agree to an immediate ceasefire and pursue a diplomatic solution to Russia and Ukraine conflict. Ceasefire



is the only diplomatic solution to prevent war between the two countries. Therefore, all parties to the war must exercise maximum restraint and make utmost efforts to pursue dialogues through all channels, including diplomatic means to contain the situation, to de-escalate tensions, and to seek peaceful resolution in accordance with international law, the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Timor-Leste also shares the view that the war has damaged the international framework for law and order and peace between countries and it also violates the U.N. charter and endangers the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of other countries. Any justification of the act of invasion in Ukraine may set a precedent for powerful nation to justify their political and territorial ambitions. This situation of war has also driven a feeling insecurity not only in the Asia-Pacific but also in the rest of the world.

The current humanitarian situation in Ukraine is also of great concern due to the high number of internally displaced people. Timor-Leste calls for the rapid establishment and full respect for humanitarian corridors and without restrictions for access to the civilian population, as well as unconditional respect for human rights, international humanitarian law and the Geneva Convention.

2. Denuclearization of Korean Peninsula

The denuclearization of Korean Peninsula issue, in spite of the extensive deliberations, yet it remains on ARF's high-level meetings' agenda without any certainty for a settlement in compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. Timor-Leste is following with deep concern over the developments in the Korean Peninsula where the continued ballistic missile tests conducted by Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). These tests of missiles indicate how fragile we are living in a high-risk security environment of nuclear threat which has escalated tensions and threatened regional peace and stability.

Likewise, the escalation of Ukraine - Russia war may have also generated more uncertainties and discouraged regional efforts to achieve regional security goals on non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament in our region. The war in Ukraine has escalated to a hostile situation where a party of the war could justify the use nuclear weapons for self-defense and ignore its destructive effects for humanity. The threat to use nuclear weapon from the war in Ukraine – Russia is setting a precedent for other states of nuclear power including in the Asia-Pacific region, to justify the use of nuclear weapons to for the sake of self-defense or deterrence weapon for other threats.

Against all odds, Timor-Leste continues to believe in the power of peaceful dialogue and constructive role played by ARF to promote a conducive atmosphere for a peaceful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In this respect, Timor-Leste strongly supports the Statement by ASEAN Foreign Minister's on the 4th of February 2022 on DPRK to comply fully with all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and take into account the international community's call for diplomacy and in the interest of maintaining peace and security in the region.

3. Myanmar crisis

Myanmar crisis has occurred since February 1, 2021 and it has triggered nationwide protests and prompting an armed rebellion against the military. The crisis continues to attract regional and international community attention as it has dragged the People of Myanmar into an unprecedented violence and humanitarian crisis. In spite of diplomatic attempts by ASEAN Member States to solve the crisis, it remains a pebble in the shoe for ASEAN. Consistent with the Five-Point Consensus, Myanmar had yet to recognize the United Nations secretary-general's special envoy on Myanmar who was appointed in December 2021. Failure to implement this consensus-based peace plan has been a matter of deep concern for ASEAN leaders which has turned out to be a hindrance to the implementation of the 5-Point Consensus.

It is clear that the crisis has also exposed differences within ASEAN, with some ASEAN Member States urging a more robust response as they see lack of cooperation of implementing the plans to bring about a cessation of violence and the opening of political dialogue involving “all parties” to Myanmar's conflicts. ASEAN members have assessed that after year of its inception in April 2021, there has been no progress in the implementation of ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus peace plan.

Timor-Leste continues to believe that there is still space for finding a solution where ASEAN Member States can play a creative and constructive leading role in resolving the crisis in accordance with the ASEAN Way principles and ASEAN existing mechanisms.

4. South China Sea

The South China Sea issue has been in ARF agenda for eight years seeking a fair solution for all. However, the failure to come to agreement and lack of commitment to comply with the existing laws has contributed to a prolonged solution process and increased uncertainties for a final solution for the South China Sea issue. Timor-Leste continues to support the ASEAN member States to take the leading role and to sustain united strong position towards the resolution of the dispute.

Consistently, Timor-Leste believes that the best solution for the South China Sea issue is for all parties to respect the principle of rules based international order and resolve the dispute peacefully in accordance with international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Timor-Leste, therefore, encourage all parties to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid excessive actions that may lead to open conflict.

The conclusion of the Code of Conduct (COC) is one crucial step to create a conducive atmosphere for solution as the COC regulates actions in the South China Sea. Despite that facts indicate negotiations on the COC are unlikely to be concluded on time, ASEAN has demonstrated positive spirit for the conclusion of negotiation of the Code of Conduct. Besides, ASEAN and China still have to reach an agreement on the Code of Conduct concerning several



contentious issues, including its legality, the scope of geographic and maritime activities and the role of other powers who have increased their presence in the Indo-Pacific region. Therefore, it is important to reach an agreement based on consensus to ensure the Code being effective, substantive, and consistent with international law, in particular UNCLOS.

II. Timor-Leste's National Security and Defence Policy

1. Overview of Timor-Leste's National Security Policy

Timor-Leste continues to upgrade its national security system to respond to new security demands based on Timor-Leste's National Security Policy and guided by the principles of National Security Law adopted in 2010. The law established an Integrated National Security System to act under a democratic control and to approach national security matters in a holistic and integrated way. The law also regulates clearly the intervention of each component of the security system which is determined by the dimension of threats regulated by its own organic law. Hence, the integrated national security system has guaranteed synergies and efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of competence and in the use of resources in a rational way by its components.

It is in the best interest of Timor-Leste to work cooperatively with its regional partners through various platforms and mechanism to address common security challenges faced in the region. Timor-Leste has adopted a cooperative security approach as reflected in the National Strategic Concept for Defence or National Defense White Paper adopted in 2015 to respond to contemporary security challenges.

i. Maritime Authority System (MAS)

To enhance the capacity of national security system components in the face of security emerging challenges, the Council of Ministers approved a draft Decree-Law, presented by the Minister of Defense concerning the creation of the Maritime Authority System (MAS). This Diploma aims to affirm national sovereignty and project the State's authority in waters under Timorese jurisdiction, in line with the established in the "Study of the Force 2020", in the Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030 and also in the Strategic Concept of Defense and National Security in force.

The Government has approved the creation of the MAS, as an institutional framework for the coordination of entities, bodies or services at the central and peripheral level that, with coordination, executive, advisory or police functions, exercise powers of State authority over maritime spaces under national sovereignty or jurisdiction. With this Decree-Law, the National Maritime Authority is also created, which is, by inertness, the Chief of Staff-General of the Armed Forces. The Directorate of the Maritime Authority and its services with MAS competences are also established.

ii. Civil Protection Authority

Consistent with the requirements of National Security Law (2010) and to complement the national security system, Timor-Leste has upgraded its National Integrated Security System

through the approval of the draft Decree Law establishing the organic structure of the Civil Protection Authority by the Council of Ministers on December 15th, 2021.

The Civil Protection system is headed by the Civil Protection Authority, as the national executive entity, regulating all Civil Protection activities, which will have the President of the Civil Protection Authority as its focal point for liaison at the political level. The President will oversee and carry out the operational, administrative-logistic and financial management of the entire Civil Protection System.

The Government of Timor-Leste has prepared the conditions for the harmonization of procedures and the definition of the competencies of each entity, in order to avoid overlaps or gaps. The establishment of the Civil Protection System opens the way for the establishment of a structured and organized Civil Protection system of Timor-Leste in accordance with the real needs of the country. The Civil Protection Authority will also ensure coherence, full articulation, rapid response, constant flow of updated information and robustness.

iii. Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) successfully concluded the baseline assessment visit for its project to strengthen the national capacity of Timor-Leste to control transfers of small arms and light weapons (SALW), including other conventional arms, and to prevent their illicit trade and diversion.

The Government of Timor-Leste took this opportunity to develop its technical and legal capacities and to facilitate its further implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all Its Aspects (PoA), as well as to support its possible future accession to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). These two global instruments provide mutually complementing and reinforcing mechanisms for countering illegal trade and illicit trafficking of SALW and other conventional arms. The project is being implemented from November 2019 to spring 2020.

Some facts and data with regard to Timor-Leste's arms register can be found at website: <https://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/timor-leste>.

iv. Defense Budget and Size

The national integrated security system of Timor-Leste upholds the principle of complementary and subsidiarity which requires all components to maximize and rationalize the use of resources in their execution of plans. Being the youngest nation of the millennium, Timor-Leste has made efforts to develop its defense or military capacity gradually to meet current demands in with the National Strategic Defense Force Plans and Defense White Paper.

In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic, Article: 146, the mission of Defense Force is to guarantee national independence, territorial integrity and the freedom and security of populations against any external aggression or threat, while respecting the constitutional order.

In addition to its main mission, the Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) or Timor-Leste's Defence Force has increased its participation in relevant defense forums and be employed



in other missions. F-DTL also has a complementary role to play when circumstances allow in the support of civilian authorities, within the framework of the Integrated National Security System, under the Law on National Security as well as in support of the State's foreign policy, in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

Correspondingly, the total annual defense budget of Timor-Leste's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces is approximately 44 million USD (2022) allocated for salary, goods and services, minor capital and capital development. The total defense expenditure of Timor-Leste Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces represents roughly 2.4 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The total number of active of Timor-Leste's defense forces is 2,747 composed by army, navy and air force personnel. The Ministry of Defense has planned to recruit approximately 600 army cadets in 2022. Timor-Leste does not have any military reserve forces.

2. Timor-Leste's Contributions to Regional Security

Timor-Leste is committed to contributing to regional security according to its own capacity by introducing new security laws and policies and strengthening the existing cooperative arrangements with its regional partners especially with ARF participant countries. Timor-Leste is, therefore, confident that contributions to regional security will eventually lead to more constructive efforts towards promoting peace, security and stability in this region.

i. Counterterrorism

Timor-Leste continues to develop its counter-terrorism and transnational Crime (CTTC) capacity through strengthening the integrated national security system in line with the Hanoi Plan of Action to implement the ARF Vision Statement (2010).

Timor-Leste shares the view that collective counter terrorism response continues to represent some of the most pressing issues for Asia-Pacific regional security and also potentially useful areas for cooperation in the ARF region towards combating this threat. Due to its transnational and multi-directional nature, measures to combating terrorism has to be a collaborative endeavor and enhanced partnership of all nations in the region.

Strengthening partnership and capacity building and joining the existing international and regional efforts to counter-terrorism and transnational crime is important for success in countering terrorism. As the region becomes increasingly more integrated and interconnected, there is a need to enhance CTTC cooperation including in the area of border management in order to better safeguard the region from the new and evolving nature of cross-border challenges.

a Centro Integrado de Gestao de Informacao e da Investigacao Crime Organizado (CIGI-ICO)

The establishment of an Integrated Information Management and Organised Crime Investigation Centre is a concrete example of collective counter-terrorism and organized crimes measures taken by Timor-Leste and Australia. The Integrated Information Management and Organised Crime Investigation Centre (CIGI-ICO) which is planned to be formalized this year, will assist both Australia and Timor-Leste to respond to CTTC challenges collectively as the contributors to regional peace and security.

The center is a collaborative and multi-disciplinary approach involving RDTL agencies across security (including law enforcement), financial and border sectors. It serves as the focal point for Timor-Leste's fight against transnational and organised crime which bears a resemblance to initiatives across the Pacific and South East Asia through the establishment of Transnational Crime centers. This CIGI-ICO will act as a point of contact for international information sharing arrangements with neighboring countries and ASEAN member states including the Pacific Islands Transnational Crime Centre.

The center is also designed to be a Timor-led and managed multi-agency mechanism to facilitate the receipt and analysis of criminal intelligence. This Center will be located in the PNTL National HQ, as it provides facilities for PNTL National Investigations (Organised Crime Division). Moreover, the Integrated Information Management Centre can act as a transnational criminal intelligence fusion cell for crimes including Narcotics Trafficking; Trafficking in Persons; Illicit movement of goods and people across borders; MAGS; Cyber Crime; Child Sexual Exploitation and Money Laundering. As such, the Integrated Information Management Centre would be led by RDTL agencies and develop transnational criminal intelligence products aligned to RDTL priorities.

b) Unidade de Informação Financeira (UIF)

Timor-Leste has also taken important measures against Terrorist Financing through its established arrangements with national and offshore banks, financial and other relevant institutions by sharing information and intelligence.

The Unidade de Informação Financeira (UIF) is the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of Timor-Leste created as an administrative entity within the Central Bank of Timor-Leste (BCTL) in accordance with on AML/CFT, Law, No. 17/2011 of 28 December on the Legal Regime for Prevention and Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT).

The nature, organisation, functions, and responsibilities of the UIF are regulated under the Decree Law No. 16/2014 of 18 of June. One of its mandates is to cooperate and exchange relevant information with foreign FIUs on AML/CFT issues and other connected transnational crimes.

Regarding the cooperation with the ARF, UIF has established formal bilateral cooperation with several FIUs of ARF countries such as Singapore, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Malaysia. These agreements regulate only the exchange of financial information between the FIUs for intelligence purposes.

ii. Non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament

From the time when Timor-Leste acceded to The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on the 5th of May 2003, Timor-Leste has been consistent and committed to support international efforts on non-proliferation and disarmament to prevent the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons to happen. Timor-Leste, therefore, is committed not to undertake under any circumstances develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. As a Non-Nuclear Weapons State (NNWS) to endorse a landmark Draft treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in September 2017, Timor-Leste stands ready to take actions to support the work of the ARF ISM on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (NPD) as a framework to address



issues of non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear technology towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction to realize the goals of ARF Hanoi Action Plan.

Consistent with its commitment to comply with the provisions of the Treaty, the National Parliament of Timor-Leste has recently ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 25th of April 2022. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) includes a comprehensive set of prohibitions on participating in any nuclear weapon activities. The ratification of the TPNW is a significant move to realize Timor-Leste's campaign to abolish nuclear weapons.

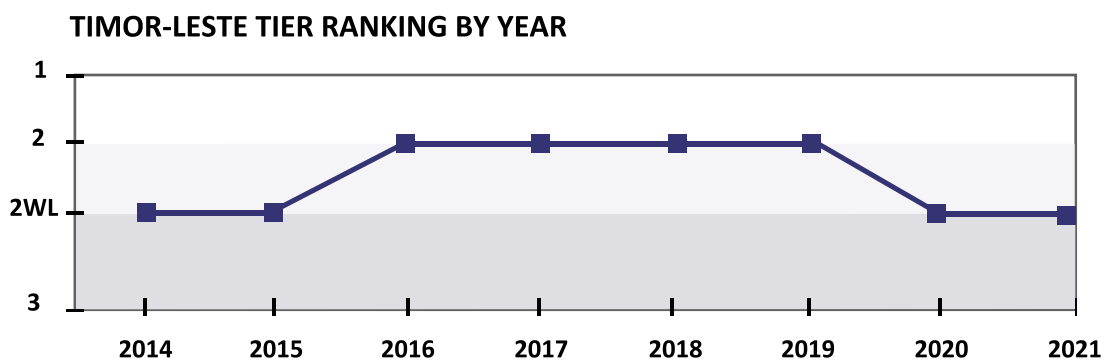
Timor-Leste shares the view that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. The National Parliament of Timor-Leste, therefore, calls upon all states to sign, ratify, or accede to the treaty. Timor-Leste stands ready to participate in ARF Preventive Diplomacy efforts or mechanisms to share and exchange views to realize its commitments on the issue and to promote regional and global cooperation for risk reduction and nuclear disarmament. Timor-Leste remains committed to support measures to implement Treaty (NPT) obligations, including our Article VI obligation “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Amidst emerging tensions and nuclear threats, Timor-Leste welcomes the strong commitment of the leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States to prevent nuclear war and Avoiding Arms Races. The joint statement by the Five States has reaffirmed the importance of addressing of preserving and complying with their bilateral and multilateral non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control agreements and commitments to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) obligations.

iii. Transnational Crime

Timor-Leste is committed to develop its capacity and mechanisms to fight transnational crimes in the region. Due to its strategic location, Timor-Leste has become both a transit and destination country for transnational crimes such as human trafficking or trafficking in persons and money laundering. The Government of Timor-Leste recently established a commission to fight human trafficking issues based on the recommendations of the Human Traffic Report of 2021.

Timor-Leste, according to the report, has maintained its position as Tier 2 in the rank of Watch List of Human Trafficking for the year 2020 and 2021 consecutively as shown in the chart below:



The Tier 2 Rank confirms that the Government of Timor-Leste does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. These efforts included investigating some potential trafficking crimes, identifying and referring for assistance one foreign trafficking victim, taking some steps to establish an anti-trafficking commission, and maintaining an anti-trafficking curriculum in some of its trainings for officials.

a) Timor-Leste's Commission to fight Human Trafficking

To implement the recommendations of the report to fight human trafficking, Timor-Leste Government through the Council of Ministers has approved the legislation creating the Commission to Fight Human Trafficking proposed by the Minister of Justice on the 30th of June 2021. The creation of this commission is a significant step to comply with the Law on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons, ensuring the existence of an inter-ministerial coordination structure specially charged with coordinating, at national level, the different entities responsible for preventing and fighting human trafficking.

At the national level, this commission guarantees the existence of a coordinated action between the various actors involved in the fight against human trafficking, in order to define the necessary policies and strategies for an effective prevention and fight against human trafficking. Various public services and entities are represented in this structure, particularly from the justice and security areas, but there are also representatives from the civil society.

The Commission is also responsible for promoting and ensuring cooperation with foreign entities in fighting human trafficking, as well as monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the conventions that Timor-Leste has ratified or will ratify in the area of human trafficking.

In addition to the establishment of the Commission, the Ministry of Interior is also preparing the implementation of a new border management information system, the MIDAS (Migration Information and Data Analysis System). This system allows the collection, processing, storage and analysis of traveller information in real time, enabling the monitoring of entries and exits of the territory more effectively. It also enables automatic queries to be sent to INTERPOL databases and other relevant watch lists in order to detect travel documents and individuals potentially linked to transnational organised crime, including human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

The creation of this commission besides fulfilling the Law on Preventing and Fighting Human Trafficking and the international obligations in this area, demonstrates that Timor-Leste is committed to gather all the necessary efforts to prevent and fight this atrocious transnational crime that attacks human dignity.

Above all, Timor-Leste stands ready to support the implementation of the ARF HA NOI PLAN OF ACTION II (2020-2025) germane to ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) in line with its complementary ASEAN Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (APA).



iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Timor-Leste continues to develop its infrastructure in order to enhance its response capacity on disaster management and emergency. Under the newly approved national authority of civil protection, Timor-Leste is able to coordinate the responses by maximizing the use of resources from the existing cooperative arrangements with some ARF countries in the area of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

On April 2022, Timor-Leste and USA celebrated the completion of the new 477 square meter storage warehouse at municipality of Baucau Airfield, as part of the first phase of the \$10.6 million U.S funded joint rehabilitation project. This is a prime example of how Timor-Leste and USA partnership is delivering tangible and meaningful opportunities to contribute to peace and security in the region.

With the completion of this project, Timor-Leste stands ready to increase its capacity in the areas of security, humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations to contribute to the development of a resilient and diversified economy. It will also enable Timor-Leste to better monitor its territory, respond to natural disasters, and promote economic development.

This new facility located in Baucau, the second largest municipality in Timor-Leste, will support for the development of the Air Component of the FALINTIL– Timor-Leste Defence Forces (F-FDTL), and the construction of infrastructure to improve security and storage capacity at the Baucau Airfield.

Furthermore, this security partnership has delivered opportunities for joint military training exercises, professional development exchanges for Timorese service members, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief cooperation.

v. Maritime Security

Maritime security remains critical for the stability and prosperity of the Southeast Asian (SEA) region, and wider ARF domain. Maritime security-related issues represent some of the most pressing and potentially useful areas for cooperation for the ARF participating countries. As the region's seas are becoming more congested and contested, Timor-Leste continues to develop its capacity and continues to invest in advanced naval and civil maritime capabilities to combat and preventing maritime security-related threats or sea-based threats. Hence, collective efforts have to be enhanced in order to protect the importance of maritime trade and the maritime environment to the global economy. Timor-Leste, therefore, will need a credible naval capacity to deal with illegal fishing, illegal immigration, maritime terrorism, drug trafficking, piracy and pollution, as well as contributing to broader regional efforts to tackle maritime threats.

a) Solidifying of Bilateral Maritime Partnerships

Timor-Leste is committed to solidify its partnership in maritime security with ARF participants through bilateral and multilateral arrangements. Timor-Leste Defense Force (F-FDTL) and U.S. military are partnering in the 27th annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT)

maritime exercise, virtually, on land, and in the territorial waters surrounding Timor-Leste. Timor-Leste has recently concluded another CARAT exercise series with U.S. to address maritime security concerns and strengthens partnerships among regional navies.

With nearly two decades of diplomatic relations, Timor-Leste and the U.S. continue to work closely to advance a shared vision of a free, open, inclusive, peaceful and secure Indo-Pacific region. The implementation of CARAT exercise last December 2021 underscored Timor-Leste's shared commitment to enhance collaboration between the Timor-Leste Defense Force (F-FDTL) and the United States military and focused on shared maritime security challenges.

This recent CARAT exercise focused on multiple land and at-sea capabilities and highlighted the ability of Timor-Leste and the U.S. The U.S. provided assets for the exercise at-sea portion of CARAT Timor-Leste included the Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Charleston and embarked MH-60S Seahawk helicopters of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 21. The exercise has engaged U.S. personnel namely staff from Commander Task Force 76, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 7, U.S. 7th Fleet, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Embassy Dili, Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste and U.S. naval forces made tremendous progress in learning more about each other's capabilities and building trust and understanding between our operators. This level of collaboration prepares is important for Timor-Leste and U.S. naval forces to work together during real-world operations.

Above all, the CARAT exercise has allowed F-FDTL members to embark on the USS Charleston for training focused on building interoperability and strengthening relationships. The exercise featured subject matter expert exchanges on navigation; engineering and damage control; and visit, board, search and seizure training, pictured.

Timor-Leste is looking forward to continue to build on this partnership in future engagements in CARAT 2022.

b) Development of Maritime capability

At the Government-to-Government level, Timor-Leste and Australia has longstanding defense and policing cooperation which continue to deliver good results. Timor-Leste's maritime cooperation with its Australian neighbor has been constructive. The gift of two Guardian-class patrol boats to F-FDTL and upgrading infrastructure at Hera Port will definitely contribute to a substantial increase in F-FDTL maritime capacity more broadly on maritime and border security. The two Guardian class patrol boats are currently still under construction, and will be completed next year (October 2023). In this regard, F-FDTL will send 60 F-FDTL members from the Navy to Australia to be trained in order that they can operate two Guardian boats in a professional manner to protect the sovereignty of the territory of Timor – Leste.

Timor-Leste continues to strengthen its maritime security cooperation based on Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) which is signed between Timor-Leste and a foreign nation stationed military force in that country namely Australia and United States of America. SOFAs are multilateral or bilateral agreements that generally establish the framework under which U.S. military personnel

operate in Timor-Leste and how domestic laws of the foreign jurisdiction apply toward the U.S. personnel in Timor-Leste.

Such agreements allow Timor-Leste to discuss with partners on collaborative measures to develop its maritime security such as development of infrastructure of Hera Port in Dili, FFDTL training, maintenance and the operation of two Guardian class patrols. Timor-Leste also cooperates with Australia regarding the capacity development of F-FDTL in dealing with natural disasters and finally discussing Peace Keeping Operations to support infrastructure in rural areas and also discussing the master plan of F-FDTL strategic plan which will be carried out from 2022-2027.

III. The Role of ARF

ARF continues to be a relevant forum for dialogue and cooperation on security in Asia-Pacific. ARF plays a leading role that ARF in the shaping regional security architecture as it provides a unique ambience gathering its 27 participant countries and provides a wide diplomatic avenue for promoting open dialogue on political and security cooperation in the region.

In the face of emerging and controversial security issues in the region, ARF has become important forum to promote confidence building which could then lead to preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution. ASEAN attributes of consensus, confidence building, and progress at a speed which does not cause anxiety to members have dominated the ARF process since inception.

Timor-Leste stands ready to contribute and looks forward to working with ARF participant countries to reach ARF goals effectively in the future.



I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

For over 20 years, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has worked to advance stability and cooperation within the Indo-Pacific region. Traditional and non-traditional security concerns continue to pose a challenge to peace and stability in the region, making ongoing engagement through the ARF valuable. The ARF has been successful over time using open dialogue, tangible cooperation, civil society, inclusivity, and results-driven initiatives to find common understandings and solutions to emerging challenges. Through our membership in the ARF, the United States affirms its commitment to finding inclusive and consensus-based solutions in accordance with respect for international law, human rights, and mutually shared values. ASEAN centrality plays an essential role in the ARF process, and the United States fully supports a constructive action- and results-oriented ARF with ASEAN at its core. Furthermore, the United States believes that clearly defined, proactive approaches in the ARF process will yield the largest benefits to long-term regional stability. Therefore, we pledge to support the ARF to advance its goal of advancing from Confidence Building to Preventive Diplomacy to Conflict Resolution. Furthering coordination between the various ASEAN-centered multilateral fora and streamlined and focused engagements will continue to help the ARF progress to achieve its goals. Therefore, the United States urges all ARF participants to engage with deliberation, understanding, and vision to deepen our cooperation and advance peace in the Indo-Pacific region for decades to come.

1. The Indo-Pacific Strategy

Our Indo-Pacific Strategy lays out an affirmative vision for the Indo-Pacific, rooted in shared values, and aims to advance policy priorities important to the entire Indo-Pacific region. The Indo-Pacific Strategy is a vision for a region that remains free and open, emphasizes collective capacity through interconnectedness, promotes broad-based prosperity, bolsters Indo-Pacific security, and builds a more resilient region. Perhaps more than any time in modern history, we are seeing a convergence of interests in the Indo-Pacific region. The U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy shares many of the same goals of ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, as well as other partners' strategies like Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific, Australia's Step Up, ROK's New South, India's Engage East, and the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy. We will spare no efforts to coordinate and align efforts with those whose values we share. We are in a decisive decade, one that holds both considerable promise and historic obstacles for the Indo-Pacific. Working with our ASEAN partners, we will build the collective capacity for the region to meet the challenges of the present, adapt for the crises of the future, and seize the opportunities of the 21st century.

2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The United States and ASEAN seek to expand engagement in gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity. Working with the ASEAN Committee on Women, the United States and ASEAN intend to hold a senior-officials meeting on gender issues in July 2022, followed by a ministerial level meeting in the fall. The joint statement on gender equality



and empowerment of all women will touch on issues such as gender mainstreaming, women's economic empowerment, women, peace, and security, and gender-based violence.

Additionally, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Symposium on Inclusive Processes for Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution will take place in Honolulu June 28-30, 2022. The Symposium draws from United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and 2250, which recognize that women and youth are often disproportionately affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and displaced persons and that peace outcomes are considered to last longer when these groups are included in the discussions. These unique demographics can meaningfully contribute to lasting peace and economic prosperity if inclusive policies are in place.

3. The DPRK's UN-proscribed nuclear and ballistic missile programs remain a serious threat to international peace and security.

The DPRK's sophisticated sanctions evasion tactics continue to allow it to abuse the international financial system, generate revenue, and procure items for its unlawful WMD and ballistic missile programs. The United States remains in close contact with the ROK and Japan to coordinate our DPRK engagement; our alliances remain ironclad and ensure peace and stability in the region. All UN Member States must do more to prevent the DPRK from undermining the UN Security Council resolutions aimed at peaceful denuclearization to protect international peace and security.

The United States-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security is the cornerstone of our strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific. The U.S.-Japan Alliance codified by this treaty advances a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. We are committed to peacefully resolving disputes and to opposing coercion and cooperate on a wide range of regional and global security issues. The close cooperation between Japan and the United States in responding to the region's natural disasters demonstrates the importance of our relationship and our exceptional capabilities to respond quickly. We have taken steps to expand our security cooperation by revising the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation to ensure that the bilateral alliance continues its vital role in deterring conflict and advancing peace and security. We are also moving forward with the Government of Japan to implement our military base realignment and consolidation plan. Progress on force realignment will help us to establish a geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable force posture in the Indo-Pacific region – critical to advancing U.S. national interests and to ensuring peace, prosperity, and stability in the region. We continue to work closely with the Japanese Government to address emerging challenges in space and cyberspace, and to strengthen our missile defense capabilities to counter threats from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In the ARF, Japan has played an active leadership role on Information Communication Technology (ICT) and cyber issues, including as a co-chair of the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Information and Communications Technology Security (ARF ISM on ICTs Security). The United States commends Japan for its strong commitment to add the collective voice of the influential G7 nations to discussions on maritime security challenges, development and humanitarian assistance, disaster relief efforts, peacekeeping operations, global economic resiliency, climate change, cyber policy issues, global health systems strengthening, the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, and human rights policies in the Indo-Pacific.



Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) is the linchpin of regional security and represents our ironclad commitment to the defense of the ROK. We will continue to enhance ongoing work within the Alliance to deepen our comprehensive strategic partnership based on our common values and mutual trust. In the past year, we continued diplomatic efforts to achieve the denuclearization of the DPRK and bring a lasting peace to the Korean Peninsula. We continue to make progress in advancing U.S.

Japan-ROK trilateral cooperation and enjoy well-established cooperation in missile defense. We continue to support trilateral information sharing on DPRK missile and nuclear capabilities. The United States has also prioritized efforts to implement the multiple UNSCRs on the DPRK, while leading a multinational effort to counter illicit North Korean maritime activity. The U.S.-ROK relationship has evolved into a global partnership. We are working together, not only on the Korean Peninsula and in the region, but also in places such as Lebanon, South Sudan, and off the coast of Somalia. This collaboration includes global health security, peacekeeping activities, stabilization, and reconstruction activities, WPS, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) efforts.

Australia is one of our most important regional partners. The Australia-New Zealand-United States (ANZUS) security treaty is the foundation of defense and security cooperation between the United States and Australia. This in turn is the anchor to security for likeminded countries in the South Pacific. Australia is committed to ensuring the Indo-Pacific and its security, economy, and media remain free and open, and regional partners look to Australia for leadership in the Pacific. The Australia-U.S. Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) is an annual “2+2” dialogue among the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense and their Australian counterparts. Interoperability with U.S. forces is a foundational part of Australia’s military modernization across all domains (Air, Sea, Land, Space, and Cyberspace). Rotations of U.S. Marines and U.S. Air Force aircraft in Australia’s Northern Territory improve interoperability and capacity through bilateral and multilateral training and exercises in the region. Marine Rotational Force – Darwin (MRF-D) has evolved from a bilateral training activity into a platform for conducting multilateral engagement with countries such as Tonga, Fiji, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Sri Lanka. Discussions during AUSMIN 2020 produced a Statement of Principles on Alliance Defense Cooperation and Force Posture Priorities in the Indo-Pacific that looks to build on the landmark agreement from 2011 establishing MRF-D. The Force Posture Working Group is developing new recommendations that will advance force-posture cooperation in the Indo-Pacific to deter coercive acts and the use of force. The United States-Australia-Japan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) – which met at the minister level in August 2017 and again in August 2019 – also plays a positive role in enhancing regional stability and security, and Australia’s October 2020 participation in Malabar naval exercises laid the groundwork for additional maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean with India Talisman Sabre 2019, the largest ever bilateral defense exercise at more than 34,000 troops, showcased the breadth and depth of the U.S.-Australia mil-to-mil relationship and featured a ship visit to the USS Ronald Reagan by Prime Minister Morrison. The biennial exercise is set to take place again in 2021 despite the challenges of operating in a pandemic environment.

The United States-New Zealand bilateral relationship continues to strengthen and mature. Following the November 2016 visit of the USS SAMPSON, the first United States military vessel



to pull into port in New Zealand in thirty years, the United States continues sending ships to New Zealand, most recently the USCGC POLAR STAR in early 2020. Our two nations conduct joint military exercises more frequently and we continue seeking new opportunities to increase our interoperability, augmented by New Zealand's decision to purchase five Lockheed Martin C-130s and four Boeing P-8s. The annual Strategic Dialogue is the United States' top-level regular policy discussion with New Zealand and was last held in July 2020. The two sides began holding formal defense policy dialogues in 2013 – most recently meeting in December 2020. The United States continues to value its partnership with New Zealand in advancing the ARF's capacity to address regional security challenges through Preventive Diplomacy; New Zealand's leadership on this issue is critical to maintaining the ARF's effectiveness and relevance as a regional security body. New Zealand is also a critical WPS partner for the United States.

The United States-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty continues to promote stability and security in the Indo-Pacific region. Our bilateral cooperation continues to contribute to regional peace and stability, with particular focus in the areas of maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, counterterrorism, countering violent extremism, and non-proliferation. The United States-Philippines Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, signed in 2014, supports a joint commitment to advancing mutual security interests by increasing our interoperability, supporting the Armed Forces of the Philippines' defense modernization plans, and improving our ability to respond to natural disasters in the region. The United States will continue to advance this enduring strategic alliance through high-level dialogues, such as the Bilateral Strategic Dialogue. Opportunities for progress also exist where we share a common interest in expanding regional defense and security cooperation through the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM)-Plus and other vehicles. The United States continues to support Philippine participation in joint exercises with other partners in the Southeast Asia and Pacific regions, as well as encouraging the Philippines to invite participation by neighboring countries in bilateral military exercises, such as Exercise BALIKATAN.

The United States and Thailand have been treaty allies for over 60 years, and we continue to collaborate to address humanitarian and security issues such as counterterrorism, counter narcotics, disaster relief, health and infectious diseases, nonproliferation, and maritime security. The United States is committed to our enduring friendship with Thailand and the Thai people, and we welcome Thailand's role in Southeast Asia and the Mekong region. Our security partnership with Thailand is bilateral and regional in scope. The U.S.-Thailand Joint Vision Statement 2020, signed by the two defense leaders last November, outlines the joint strategy between the two militaries to achieve our mutually shared goals into the next decade. In support of this strategy, Thailand and the United States co-host Cobra Gold, the Indo-Pacific region's largest annual multilateral military exercise. Since 1950, Thailand has received U.S. military equipment, essential supplies, training, and assistance in the construction and improvement of facilities. As part of our mutual defense cooperation, we have developed a joint military exercise program that engages all the services of each nation and counts an annual slate of more than 400 military exercises and engagements.

The United States and Indonesia address strategic challenges as strategic partners. In 2015, the United States and Indonesia forged a Strategic Partnership to expand cooperation on shared strategic interests in the region and held a strategic dialogue at the ministerial level in 2021. Since 2021, Indonesia has also closely collaborated with the United States as

our country coordinator in ASEAN, including cooperation to organize a U.S.-ASEAN Special Summit in May 2022 in Washington DC. To build capacity and readiness, the United States and Indonesian militaries conduct regular exercises, such as the Air Force fighter jet exercise Cope West, the Navy-to-Navy exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training in Indonesia, and the Indonesia-hosted multilateral naval exercise Komodo. In 2022, the United States and Indonesia will expand Garuda Shield, previously an Army-to-Army exercise, into a joint, multi-national event with all components of the Indonesian National Armed Forces and more than 14 participating countries. The United States military values its close partnership with Indonesia in areas that closely align with United States security interests, such as maritime security, counterterrorism, and HA/DR. Indonesia continues to focus its professional military education on sending students to the United States National and Service War Colleges, United States Service Command and General Staff Colleges, and Maritime Security and Defense Professionalization courses. The United States Coast Guard and Indonesian Maritime Security Agency have been working together closely on maritime security, and the State Department funded the construction of a maritime training center, which will open in 2023.

Singapore is a strong partner of the United States and an active participant —regionally and globally — to ensure peace and stability. Our two countries have close and long-standing defense ties with our militaries participating in several bilateral and multilateral exercises each year. This year, the United States and Singapore commemorated the 30th Anniversary of Exercise COMMANDO SLING. In addition, Singapore hosts the rotational deployment of U.S. military aircraft and ships to conduct a variety of maritime patrol activities to counter piracy and terrorism, as well as provide HA/DR in the region. Singapore has the second-largest military training presence in the United States each year. Singapore was the first and only Asian country to have contributed both assets and personnel to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Additionally, the Singapore Navy has commanded Combined Task Force 151 in the Gulf of Aden on numerous occasions. In recent years, we made significant progress in our relationship, including the renewal the 1990 MOU governing our presence in Singapore; the signing of a non-binding MOU to establish and enduring Singapore fighter training presence in Guam by 2029; the signing of a Foreign Military Sales case for the F-35B, and the signing a MOU concerning cooperation in cyberspace. In 2018, we broadened our relationship by renewing a memorandum of understanding for the Third Country Training Program (TCTP), an ASEAN capacity-building initiative jointly managed by the United States and Singapore. Aimed at bridging development gaps in the region, the TCTP has provided technical assistance and training to over 1,200 officials through more than 40 workshops since its inception in 2012. The TCTP curriculum includes non-traditional security threats such as cybersecurity and cybercrime. At the head of government-level meeting in October 2017 and again in September 2019, the United States and Singapore reaffirmed the strong and enduring partnership between our two countries. Recognizing the transboundary nature of cybersecurity threats, the two leaders commended the progress made under the 2016 MOU on Cybersecurity Cooperation and celebrated progress under Singapore's 2018 ASEAN chair year to secure the digital economy as a key engine for future economic growth. In the ARF, Singapore has played an active and strong leadership role on ICT and cyber issues, including as a co-chair of the newly established ISM on ICTs Security. As a like-minded partner on counterterrorism issues, Singapore plays an important role in facilitating regional efforts against terrorism and violent extremism. In 2021, Singapore established the multilateral Counterterrorism Information Facility (CTIF) to bring together like-minded countries to share intelligence, provide early



warning, monitoring, and analysis capabilities in a centralized and coordinated manner. As the world's largest transshipment port, we work closely with Singapore on trade security and counter proliferation efforts, and Singapore continues with its trial of the World Customs Organization's Cargo Targeting System (CTS).

The relationship between the United States and Malaysia has reached new heights in recent years, and the United States is eager to continue working with our Malaysian partners to increase regional and global security. A robust slate of bilateral and multilateral military exercises has enhanced our respective capabilities to promote regional security and respond to humanitarian disasters. The United States values Malaysia's past contributions to the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan, and we are working closely on maritime security, counter terrorism, including stopping the flow of foreign terrorist fighters joining ISIS, humanitarian assistance / disaster relief, and military medical cooperation. Malaysia participates in Singapore's Counter Terrorism Information Facility and plans to deploy military members to join Operation Gallant Phoenix in Amman, Jordan in later 2022. The U.S. Coast Guard and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency work closely to address maritime security issues in Malaysia's EEZ. Malaysia is also an important counterproliferation partner and the United States seeks to increase cooperation. The United States looks forward to working closely with Malaysia in advancing our shared priorities and interests in the context of promoting regional cooperation, peacekeeping capacity building, respect for international law, ASEAN centrality, and the maintenance of peace and stability. In the ARF, Malaysia has played an active and strong leadership role on ICT and cyber issues, including in the newly established ISM on ICTs Security. Malaysia also plays an active role in the ISM on Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) and hosted a United States-funded ARF workshop on aviation security and information sharing in July 2019.

United States-Vietnam relations underwent a dramatic transformation since we normalized ties in 1995, and Vietnam has emerged as one of our strongest partners in the Indo-Pacific. Our robust partnership with Vietnam on political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties through a healthy set of annual dialogues continues to grow, spanning issues from human rights to security and defense relations. The United States and Vietnam are cooperating in areas such as security, peacekeeping operations, trade, nonproliferation, health, the environment, science and technology, education, WPS, and human rights. Defense ties have grown rapidly over the past several years, embodied by the lifting of the lethal weapon sales ban in 2016 and the historic March 2018 and March 2020 visits of United States aircraft carriers to Danang. In August 2020, as part of the U.S. Department of State's Excess Defense Articles program, the United States officially transferred a second high endurance cutter to the Vietnamese Coast Guard, and we are finalizing the transfer of a third cutter. In 2019, the United States and Vietnam signed an MOU strengthening cooperation and joint efforts to combat wildlife trafficking as a serious transnational crime. Criminal justice sector ties have also developed rapidly since 2016, with numerous trainings, exchanges, and workshops to increase Vietnam's capacity and interoperability to combat transnational crime, effectively and fairly prosecute crimes, and enhance maritime security in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The United States-India global comprehensive strategic partnership stands upon shared values and complementary visions of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The United States government views India as a leading partner in safeguarding a free and open Indo-Pacific. The United States holds regular consultations with India on a range of political, economic, and security issues in both bilateral and multi-country formats. The fourth 2+2 Ministerial in April 2022, led by the Secretaries of State and Defense alongside their Indian counterparts, demonstrated how both of our countries seek to promote a resilient, rules-based international order. The United States participated in three Leader-level Summits with India, Australia, and Japan most recently in Tokyo on May 24, 2022. Cabinet-level engagements and leader-level meetings and teleconferences are underpinned by numerous high-level dialogues and working groups, including climate, defense, regional security, counternarcotics, counterterrorism, peacekeeping, trade, energy, oceans, health, cybersecurity, and education. Since India's designation as a Major Defense Partner in 2016, we finalized major defense enabling agreements and increased interoperability through numerous military exercises such as the tri-services Tiger Triumph exercise, the Yudh Abhyas and Vajra Prahar exercises, and the Malabar naval exercises with Japan and Australia. We are bolstering robust private industry collaboration through initiatives such as the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative. We also look forward to working with India and likeminded partners to deepen humanitarian and disaster relief cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and joint peacekeeping capacity-building efforts. India is also an active participant in the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus mechanism.

The United States seeks a constructive, results-oriented relationship with China. We seek cooperation with China where our interests align, such as establishing a fair and reciprocal trade relationship and addressing the rise in global synthetic drug production and trafficking. In other areas, we will compete to defend American interests and values like transparency, the rule of law, market-based economic competition, freedom of navigation and overflight, human rights, and religious freedom. We remain concerned with China's articulated national strategy of military-civil fusion, which seeks to develop the Chinese military into the world's most capable military, in part through exploitation of its access to the international science, technology and innovation ecosystem, to develop the hard power capabilities to press its regional agenda. China has openly committed to upholding these and other principles that underpin security and prosperity for the Indo-Pacific. The United States asks that China stand by its word and protect the rights of its people, rather than detaining over one million ethnic Muslims in Xinjiang, repressing ethnic minorities throughout the country, violating international obligations in Hong Kong, making unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, and engaging in disruptive trade practices. With regards to the South China Sea, the United States has a vital national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, respect for international law, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peace and stability. The Chinese military's provocative reclamation and militarization of disputed outposts in the South China Sea, its attempts to coerce and intimidate, and planned deployments of floating nuclear power plants in areas of competing maritime claims, threaten the sovereignty of other nations and undermine regional stability. The United States urges all claimants, including China, to manage and resolve disputes peacefully and in accordance with international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. The United States-China economic relationship is very important, and the United States is committed to reaching meaningful, fully enforceable commitments to resolve China's structural issues.



United States defense engagement with Brunei remains robust. Despite the challenges introduced by COVID restrictions on in-person exercises and exchanges, Brunei continues to prioritize our bilateral defense relationship. In addition to continuing our annual bilateral Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise, our annual multilateral naval exercise Southeast Cooperation and Training (SEACAT), this year Brunei hosted Pahlawan Warrior (PW) 2022, the largest bilateral event between the U.S. Army and the Royal Brunei Land Force. The last iteration of PW took place in 2018, with the 2020 exercise being cancelled because of the COVID pandemic. PW22 represents the resumption of an important element of the U.S.-Brunei defense relationship. Additional defense highlights include the Royal Brunei Navy sending the Darussalam-class offshore patrol vessel KDB Darulehsan (OPV 07) to the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) multinational maritime exercise in 2020, and Brunei agreeing to establish additional Service-to-Service talks to build on the first Airman-to-Airman Talks held in 2020. United States military officers have regularly attended the Royal Brunei Armed Forces Staff College since January 2014. We continue to look for ways to expand our military-to-military cooperation, including through pursuing agreements that would accommodate deeper levels of defense cooperation. On the back of diplomacy and defense cooperation, the promising United States-Brunei relationship aims to help secure mutual security interests in Southeast Asia.

The United States has cooperated with the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) in areas of mutual concern ranging from international peacekeeping, defense reform and professionalization to humanitarian assistance and disaster response. In early 2017, the Royal Cambodian Government suspended all military-to-military exercises with the United States. Since then, they have conducted three joint military exercises with the People's Liberation Army. In response to democratic backsliding, we suspended the delivery of four Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs) and have carefully considered the pace of restoring our military-military relationship until we see progress. We continue to cooperate in peacekeeping operations, humanitarian mine action, medical research, and United States Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) personnel accounting.

United States has suspended defense engagement with Burma since the coup. All engagement with and assistance to the Burmese military has been suspended since the February 1, 2021, coup d'état. The United States has reprogrammed aid that had been previously intended to assist the Burmese government to humanitarian, pro-democracy and other efforts that show our continued support for the people of Burma. Nevertheless, the United States continues to use public and private channels to urge the military to cease the violence, release all those unjustly detained, and restore Burma's path to democracy.

Laos' chairmanship of ASEAN and the signing of a Comprehensive Partnership between the United States and the Lao PDR in 2016 provided new opportunities for bilateral engagement. While we continue to address legacy issues, like the important Prisoners of War/Missing in Action accounting mission and helping Laos manage contamination from unexploded ordnance, we are building a new relationship for the 21st century. The many facets of our cooperation—which include health, law enforcement, trade, education, environmental protection, military issues, cultural preservation, disaster preparedness, trafficking in persons and illegal drugs, entrepreneurship, energy, rule of law programs, and more—address the country's



most critical and systemic needs. Laos served as the United States' country coordinator for ASEAN from 2018-2021 and provided a vital link to the organization.

The United States and ASEAN agreed to establish a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) at the U.S.-ASEAN Special Summit in May 2022. The CSP negotiations will follow ASEAN's established process; the United States and ASEAN expect to adopt the CSP at the U.S.-ASEAN Summit in November 2022. The CSP builds upon decades of partnership between the United States and ASEAN and will serve as a guide for future close cooperation.

The United States values defense cooperation with Timor-Leste in areas of mutual concern including; maritime security, humanitarian assistance/disaster relief, border security, defense reform, and professionalization. During the 2018 Bilateral Defense Discussion, Timor-Leste's Minister of Defense requested United States assistance with rehabilitating Baucau Airfield. An MOU for this multi-million-dollar project was signed in June 2021 and a groundbreaking ceremony was held on July 12, 2021. Timor-Leste demonstrated commitment to regional security by participating in a number of multinational exercises. In 2018, Timor-Leste participated in Pacific Angel with the United States Air Force, which included medical and engineer civil action projects. Timor-Leste also participated in Cooperation and Readiness Afloat (CARAT), which enhances their maritime security efforts. Timor-Lester Armed Forces (F-FDTL) hosts multilateral exercise Hari Hamutuk which enhances Timor-Leste's interoperability with the United States, Australia, and Japan. In 2019, Timor-Leste participated in Pacific Partnership with the United States Navy, which included a HA/DR simulation exercise and symposium. A Navy Seabee detachment has an enduring presence in Timor-Leste since 2009 and partners with the F-FDTL, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Education. The detachment recently completed its 107th construction project. The United States hosts several military officers and ministerial civil servants as part of the International Military and Education Training (IMET) program. This year, Timor-Leste will celebrate its first United States Army Command and General Staff College graduate. Timorese IMET graduates continue to fill roles of prominence and enhances defense professionalization. Additionally, the United States sponsors an English language-training course in Timor-Leste, which trains 40 military personnel each year. Timor-Leste has applied to join ASEAN and the United States supports their application. This year marks Timor-Leste's 20th year as a democracy and 20 years of diplomatic relations with the U.S. To demonstrate our commitment and celebrate the inauguration of Timor-Leste's new president, the U.S. sent a presidential delegation in May 2022.

Papua New Guinea (PNG)'s strategic location makes it a critical partner for the United States and allies in preserving the freedom of navigation in the South Pacific and in advancing other priorities of the Indo-Pacific Strategy. PNG possesses the land area, population, and endowment of natural resources and relatively diversified economic base to serve as a policy bellwether within the South Pacific. PNG's security challenges include maritime domain awareness; border security; logistics and resourcing; and policing in districts experiencing high rates of crime, gender-based violence, and/or intercommunal violence. Since the successful and peaceful conclusion of the 2019 Bougainville referendum the United States has continued to engage with partner countries, civil society organizations, and government officials as the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government negotiate the referendum's results. Since Papua New Guinea hosted APEC in 2018 and the security cooperation it engendered



between PNG and the United States, military forces from both countries have participated in regional exercises, worked to locate missing U.S. World War II personnel, and advanced opportunities to plan for unexploded ordnance removal. United States military personnel continue planning and coordination with the PNG Defence Force to build and develop a variety of facilities at the naval base in Lombrum, Manus. Exchange opportunities ranged from conferences and workshops on common priorities like fisheries enforcement and port security – PNG will host an upcoming port security training as part of an ASEAN Regional Forum series – to exploratory talks between national law enforcement agencies in each country to develop capacity building training programs. In 2019, the United States Department of Defense established a permanent Defense Attaché Office at the United States embassy in Port Moresby and further expanded defense cooperation capacity with the establishment of a security cooperation office in 2021. Papua New Guinea sent its first cadet to the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York in 2019. Actions taken under the Indo-Pacific Strategy's security pillar complemented other activities that focus on economics (developing a welcoming climate for United States investment and development initiatives) and promote shared Western values (including advancing gender equality and women's empowerment; implementing people-to-people education and cultural exchanges; supporting the fight against HIV and polio; protecting environmental equities in PNG's rich biodiversity; and encouraging resiliency and disaster risk reduction). The United States also aided Papua New Guinea's COVID-19 response through the provision of ventilators and training, including support for isolation, containment, and critical care management; risk communication and community engagement; infection prevention and control; and case detection, surveillance, and lab support. Technical assistance for vaccine deployment will support communication and demand generation; policy, planning, and coordination; health workforce support and training; and service delivery.

The United States and the European Union are deepening collaboration with Asian partners to advance regional security and development, and to build regional institutions and support for the rule of law. The United States and the EU share common goals to promote human rights, freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, and respect for international law in the East China Sea and South China Sea. We are working together to encourage China to deepen its engagement with the international community, act in accordance with international law and standards, and participate responsibly in the global economic order. We are also coordinating our messages to condemn potential DPRK provocations, uphold UNSC Resolutions, and pressure the regime to address its egregious human rights abuses. United States-EU cooperation has also played a critical role in supporting Myanmar's ongoing democratic transition, we joint-sponsored in March a UNHRC resolution calling for the creation of a fact-finding mission. We regularly collaborate with the EU through the Friends of the Mekong mechanism as well as other senior-level forums. As Co-Chair of the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Maritime Security, the EU demonstrated a commitment to strengthening a regional MDA architecture using technology and fusions centers to counter IUU fishing and to strengthen the international maritime rules-based order; these efforts are aligned with United States capacity building and policy goals in Southeast Asia. As we rebalance our interests and investments to the Indo-Pacific, we look forward to continually expanding our coordination with the EU through the ARF and other regional fora.

U.S.-Bangladesh relations have strengthened under the Indo-Pacific Strategy, which has increased U.S. support for maritime security. The United States is the largest donor in the



Rohingya crisis response, providing \$16 billion since 2017. U.S.-Bangladesh counter terrorism cooperation has improved security within the country, and the United States also continues to support Bangladesh's considerable contributions to international peacekeeping. The United States and Bangladesh have held three important dialogues during the first half of 2022, the Partnership Dialogue in March, and the Security Dialogue in April, and the High-Level Economic Consultation in June. These important meetings have grown our relationship, although difficulties do exist. Treasury's sanctions and State's designations on the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and several RAB officials in December 2021 for human rights violations has caused some friction, but high-level leaders from both countries agree that we can closely work together in other areas. For instance, the United States and Bangladesh are moving forward on a General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA). Bangladeshi military students continue to attend premier U.S. military courses of instruction, with 27 students completing courses at various military colleges since 2017. Bangladesh is the second largest Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund partner in South Asia and has received over \$60 million in CT assistance since the 2016 Holey Bakery Attack. The ARF is an important forum for the United States and Bangladesh to raise the welfare of 1.1 million Rohingya in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasn Char.

The U.S.-Sri Lanka security relationship continues to grow amid economic crisis and human rights concerns. After years of mismanagement and taking on debt loads it could not repay, Sri Lanka is currently facing a difficult economic crisis. The crisis led to protests and the ouster of Prime Minister Mahindra Rajapaksa in May 2022. Under the new Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, Sri Lanka is seeking a package with the IMF to restructure its debt, but this will likely take months and Sri Lanka will require bridge financing. Another obstacle arose during FY 2021 when the Department of State did not certify the Sri Lankan Government's progress on human rights, preventing the USG from providing Title 10 or Title 22 Security Assistance grant funding. Nevertheless U.S. security cooperation with Sri Lanka has continued to grow. The USG supports Maritime Security and interoperability with multilateral partners, Maritime Domain Awareness, Counterterrorism (CT), support for United Nations Peacekeeping missions, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief. In October 2021, a second High Endurance Cutter (WHEC), to supplement the WHEC given to Sri Lanka in 2019, was transferred to Sri Lanka. The Montana National Guard and Sri Lanka began a State Partnership Program in 2020 and has seen visits from Sri Lanka to Montana and vice versa. Other key security activities include exercises with the Sri Lankan Navy and Air Force to build cooperation on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and maritime security issues toward a safe and prosperous Indo-Pacific. U.S. advisors and assistance continues to assist Sri Lanka in promoting transparency procurement processes, enhance the rule of law, and support government and civil society efforts to promote good governance, accountability, justice, reconciliation, and human rights.

The United States worked to strengthen our engagement with Mekong countries through the Mekong-U.S. Partnership (MUSP). Since launching the MUSP in 2020, the United States strives to build on the development assistance-focused Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) to broaden cooperation across a range of strategic areas, to focus U.S.-Mekong cooperation under a single, whole-of-government umbrella, and to work with like-minded partners and allies on a commitment to the subregion's security and prosperity. Entering its third ministerial cycle, the MUSP, Mekong country partners, and the United States will continue to execute activities listed in the 2021-2023 Mekong-U.S. Partnership Plan of Action. Four areas of engagement guide the MUSP's work:



economic connectivity; human capital development; transboundary water and natural resources management; and non-traditional security, including collaboration on emerging threats such as health security, pandemic response, countering transnational crime, cyber security, and countering trafficking in people, drugs, and wildlife. MUSP-supported Mekong Water Data Initiative tools, such as the Mekong Dam Monitor, are helping shine a light on how dam operations impact the Mekong River and its tributaries and are benefitting governments and communities. Cooperation to address the scourge of transnational organized crime in the Mekong subregion has also intensified. Last year, the Friends of the Mekong celebrated 10 years and welcomed new member the Mekong River Commission (MRC) Secretariat. The Friends of the Mekong include the United States, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, , Australia, the European Union, Republic of Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and Mekong River Commission Secretariat. At the 2021 ministerial meeting, India and the United Kingdom attended as observers.

II. National Security and Defense Policy

In March 2021, the White House released the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (Interim Guidance) that will guide the United States' national security and defense policy until the National Security Strategy is published. The Interim Guidance recognizes that preserving America's security requires a whole-of-government approach that leverages a broad range of instruments of national power. The military has a critical role to play in protecting the security of the United States, particularly as it relates to deterring and if necessary, fighting wars, but it is only one instrument of foreign policy. Diplomacy, development, economic measure, and other forms of statecraft—backed by highly capable armed forces that are equipped to deter our adversaries and defeat threats that emerge—are the tools of first resort to advance America's interests globally.

In March 2022, the Department of Defense transmitted to Congress the classified 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS). Consistent with the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, the classified NDS sets out how the Department of Defense will contribute to advancing and safeguarding vital U.S. national interests – protecting the American people, expanding America's prosperity, and realizing and defending our democratic values.

The Defense priorities are:

1. Defending the homeland, paced to the growing multi-domain threat posed by the PRC
2. Deterring strategic attacks against the United States, Allies, and partners
3. Deterring aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict when necessary, prioritizing the PRC challenge in the Indo-Pacific, then the Russia challenge in Europe
4. Building a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem.

The NDS reiterates that mutually beneficial Alliances and partnerships are an enduring strength for the United States, and are critical to achieving our objectives, as the unified response to Russia's further invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated. Answering this "call to action," the Department will incorporate ally and partner perspectives, competencies, and advantages at every stage of defense planning.

Resources:

- a. Interim National Security Strategic Guidance: https://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2021_Interim.pdf

- b. 2022 National Defense Strategy Fact Sheet: <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Mar/28/2002964702/-1/-1/1/NDS-FACT-SHEET.PDF>
- c. A broad range of data is publicly available from the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller) at <https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/>

Annual defense expenditures

Figure 1.1. Department of Defense Budget

\$ in billions	FY 2021Enacted	FY 2022Enacted	FY 2023 Request
Total	703.7	742.3	773.0

The President's FY 2023 Budget Request includes \$773 billion for the Department of Defense. The Budget Request reinforces the Department of Defense's commitment to the concept of integrated deterrence, allows us to better sequence and conduct operations around the globe that are aligned to our priorities, modernizes the Joint Force, and delivers meaningful support for our dedicated workforce and their families., enables

The budget request reflects the National Defense Strategy and the focus of that strategy on the pacing challenge of China. It will help us prepare for other future challenges, as well, including those posed by climate change. It preserves our readiness and deterrent posture against the threats we face today: the acute threat of an aggressive Russia and the constantly emerging threats posed by North Korea, Iran, and violent extremist organizations. And it absolutely supports our policy of U.S. global leadership of — and responsibility for — our vast network of alliances and partnerships.

Further information regarding the DoD National Defense Budget can be found at: <https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/Budget2023/>**Total number of personnel in national armed forces**

Table A-5. Active Component End Strength (in Thousands)

Service	FY 20211	FY 2022	ΔFY21 – FY22
Army	485.0	485.9	+0.9
Navy	342.5	347.8	+5.3
Marine Corps	184.7	184.1	-0.6
Air Force	333.8	327.3	-6.6
Space Force2	38	6.4	+6.4
TOTAL	1,346.0	1,351.5	+5.5

1FY 2021 reflects projected end strength levels. Numbers may not add due to rounding.

2FY 2021 Space Force end strength included in Service numbers (non-add)

**Table A-6. Active Component End Strength (in Thousands)**

Service	FY 20211	FY 2022	ΔFY21 – FY22
Army Reserve	189.5	189.8	+0.3
Navy Reserve	60.2	58.8	-1.4
Marine Corps Reserve	38.5	38.5	+0.0
Air Force Reserve	70.1	70.3	+0.2
Army National Guard	336.0	336.5	+0.5
Air National Guard	107.7	108.1	+0.4
TOTAL	801.9	802.0	+0.1

1FY 2021 reflects projected end strength levels. Numbers may not add due to rounding

i. Counterterrorism

The United States is actively engaged in multilateral and regional efforts to strengthen regional partners and allies and to promote continued regional cooperation on counterterrorism measures. The human atrocities and extreme acts of violence committed by ISIS are not isolated to the Middle East. ISIS has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to direct and inspire attacks in Europe and Asia, including the horrific attacks in Indonesia, Philippines, and Sri Lanka. It is critical that United States and partners cooperate purposefully to counter ISIS and its violent extremist outgrowths. The Indo-Pacific is not immune to terrorist influence either; therefore, the United States seeks to encourage and support strategic counterterrorism policies in the region. This approach places a premium on building the institutional capacities of states to promote the rule of law and eliminate the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

The United States is deeply concerned about ISIS's continued influence in recruiting followers from Southeast Asia and the terrorist group's ability to inspire attacks in the region. We encourage ASEAN member states to increase both internal and external information sharing on known and suspected terrorists (KST), particularly by requiring the provision and use of Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record (API/PNR) data on all airline passengers and by connecting all points of entry to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global police communications system (I-24/7). To help ensure passenger screening against INTERPOL I-24/7 law enforcement databases, the United States is prepared to assist ASEAN member states in connecting priority ports of entry and automating the reporting of stolen and lost travel documents to INTERPOL. The United States encourages global commitment to implementing UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2396 on countering terrorist travel and addressing the challenges associated with returning and relocating 2396 on foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying families, which includes obligations to strengthen border security, watchlisting, and information sharing. To this end, the United States is proud to have co-hosted UNSCR 2396-related training workshops with several ASEAN and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) member states since the passing of this landmark resolution in 2017.



The United States encourages partner nations to implement the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy and the recommendations of the Secretary General's Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism, including developing national action plans to take a whole-of-society approach to combating this security threat. The United States works closely with regional partners at the United Nations and in regional fora such as the ARF, ADMM-Plus, Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), and APEC to strengthen counterterrorism capabilities. These include efforts to support regional implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy and international instruments related to countering terrorism. The U. S. government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), helped ASEAN establish a comprehensive, multidisciplinary work plan to implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism under the Manila Declaration 2019-2025, also known as the Bali Work Plan. USAID continues to support ASEAN's Working Group on Counter-Terrorism in leading the Bali Work Plan implementation effort through the development of the ASEAN Training of Trainers program to address disinformation and promote media literacy, which was launched in January 2022 in collaboration with U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism. Following up on this program, in May 2022, USAID supported pilot training to customize the program for each member states' context. In August 2022, the United States will co-chair the Regional Workshop on Preventing and Countering Extremism: Taking Stock of Ongoing and Emerging Threats and Trends and USAID will support a follow-on Multi Sectoral Task Force and ASEAN Partners Meeting for Implementation of the Bali Work Plan 2019-2025.

The United States also serves with the Russian Federation as the Co-Chair of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). The GICNT is a voluntary partnership of 89 nations and six official observers, and its mission is to strengthen global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism. To advance its mission, the GICNT has conducted 11 senior-level meetings and more than 100 other multilateral activities, including workshops and tabletop exercises, across the GICNT focus areas of nuclear detection, forensics, and response and mitigation. Thailand and Australia successfully co-hosted a virtual GICNT engagement on nuclear forensics in 2020, and the United States will look to continue partnering with countries in the region to support future GICNT and regional efforts in countering the threat posed by nuclear terrorism.

The ARF Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Work Plan contributes to regional security through work in its priority areas – Illicit Drugs; Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN); and Counter Radicalization. The United States is co-leading efforts to combat illicit drugs and CBRN. The United States partnered with the Philippines and ROK to conduct an ARF TTX on Response Capabilities to CBRN Incidents in 2022.

The U.S. Department of State works closely with the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the FBI-administered Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) to support its mission in protecting the United States by promoting effective aviation and border security screening with our foreign partners through enhanced information sharing. For example, an important effort in our counterterrorism work is Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6 (HSPD-6), an initiative on domestic and international information sharing signed following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Through HSPD-6, the State Department works with the TSC to negotiate the exchange of KST identity and encounter data with foreign partners to enhance our mutual border screening efforts. HSPD-6 arrangements establish institutionalized



operational mechanisms for the reciprocal sharing of unclassified, biographic KST identities between the United States and select foreign partners. They also facilitate the reporting of encounters with these identities, such as consular and border screening events, between partners. Such arrangements mutually enhance United States and foreign partners' border security by helping prevent and interdict the travel of KSTs while further strengthening our counterterrorism cooperation at a strategic policy level in line with obligations established under UNSCR 2396.

The TSC, as the U.S. government entity that manages the U.S. watchlist, implements these arrangements once signed with foreign partners. These arrangements allow partners to screen identities against a subset of United States government sourced KST data, which can help detect and prevent terrorist travel by creating an extra layer of security on top of the data a country may otherwise use for screening. HSPD-6 arrangements are a pre-requisite to participate in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program. To date, the United States has over 70 such arrangements in place. The U.S. Department of State also works closely with its partners at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to strengthen global aviation security by engaging foreign partners in bolstering aviation screening at last point of departure airports with direct flights to the United States to identify and prevent known or suspected terrorists from boarding commercial flights. The United States has also provided bilateral counterterrorism financing for capacity building assistance to several nations in the region, including the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia. The United States continues to support the enabling of its partners and allies to secure the region effectively from potential terrorist threats.

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

The United States will continue to fulfill its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to pursue the objectives of the NPT across its three pillars of nonproliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to strengthen the global nuclear nonproliferation regime. The United States will head off costly arms races and re-establish our credibility as a leader in arms control. That is why we moved quickly to extend the New START Treaty with Russia. Where possible, we will also pursue new arms control arrangements. We will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, while ensuring our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies and partners remain strong and credible. The United States underlines the importance of commencing immediately negotiations of a treaty to ban production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, known as a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT), if negotiations are governed by consensus and all the key states participate. Since the early 1990s, the United States has maintained a moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. Pending the conclusion of FMCT negotiations, we call on all states that have not done so to declare and maintain similar moratoria.

The United States supports the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and is committed to work to achieve its entry into force, recognizing the significant challenges that lie ahead in reaching this goal. In line with the goals of the CTBT, the United States continues to observe its zero-yield nuclear explosive testing moratorium and calls on all states possessing nuclear weapons to declare or maintain such a moratorium.



In the Indo-Pacific region, the substantial projected growth in the PRC's nuclear arsenal, especially when viewed in the context of China's more assertive foreign policy, is a key concern for the United States and its allies and partners. As China's nuclear arsenal continues to expand, it will increasingly undermine the security of the United States, our allies, and our partners in the region and may force the United States or other countries to reevaluate the sufficiency of their defense postures. China's nuclear arsenal does not need to equal the U.S. arsenal to fuel an arms race, nor is symmetry between U.S. and Chinese nuclear forces a precursor for China to practice mutual transparency and restraint. The United States will pursue arms control to reduce the dangers from China's growing nuclear arsenal. We hope that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its security interest. It is not a trap designed to weaken China's defenses, but a mechanism to reduce the risk of military crises and manage the threat of destabilizing arms races, something that should be in the interest of both countries.

The NPT remains critical to our common security. Looking toward the tenth NPT Review Conference, we are encouraging NPT Parties to focus on their common interests in each of the treaty's three pillars of nonproliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We seek the universalization of the Additional Protocol to ensure that IAEA safeguards remain effective and robust, both to provide credible assurances that states are fulfilling their NPT obligations and to uphold the Treaty's integrity by addressing noncompliance.

The United States supports practical efforts to advance the global capacity for nuclear disarmament verification. A key effort in this vein is the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV). The IPNDV brings together more than 25 states with and without nuclear weapons under a cooperative framework to further understanding of the complex challenges involved in the verification of nuclear disarmament and to identify potential solutions to those challenges.

In 2020, representatives from 43 countries participated in the first two meetings of the United States organized Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) Working Group. During these meetings, the participants deliberated on ways to address challenges in the security environment and improve prospects for disarmament negotiations. As a result of these deliberations, CEND participants established three subgroups to identify ways to improve the international security environment to overcome obstacles to further progress on nuclear disarmament. The United States supports practical efforts to create an environment conducive to further progress on nuclear disarmament and fashioning a world in which nuclear weapons are no longer necessary to deter aggression and maintain global strategic stability. The CEND Working Group provides a forum for the meaningful and realistic dialogue that is necessary to address the underlying security concerns that cause countries to rely on nuclear weapons for their security and to pursue effective measures that will help create such an environment. The United States does not support the TPNW, which will not lead to the elimination of a single nuclear weapons, or enhance any state's security, and therefore is not an "effective measure" as envisioned by the NPT. The five NPT nuclear-weapon states (P5) have met regularly to discuss nuclear policy, promote mutual confidence, and discuss issues related to the fulfillment of the NPT.

The United States supports the expansion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in conformity with the NPT and according to international standards of safety, security, and nonproliferation)



and believes it can be a clean, reliable source of energy for states seeking to meet increasing energy demands. Such efforts must be conducted in accordance with high standards for international safeguards and in full cooperation with the IAEA. The next generation of reactors, including small modular reactors (SMRs), offer a new nuclear power pathway for countries. These technologies have economic and safety advantages, can be right sized for the grid capacity, and offer a range of applications beyond electricity generation. The United States will continue its technical outreach and partnership to raise awareness of SMRs' benefits, diverse applicability and related nuclear security, safety, and safeguards considerations. As part of this effort, the United States will continue to raise awareness among regional partners of nuclear nonproliferation and security concerns, including but not limited to the anticipated deployment of floating nuclear power plants in the Indo-Pacific region. The United States is engaged in capacity-building cooperation with agreed ASEAN partners in this topical area as part of the Foundational Infrastructure for Responsible Use of SMR Technology (FIRST) program. The United States intends to co-host with Vietnam an ARF-approved workshop on Nuclear Nonproliferation Safety and Security Standards and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology and is conducting a series of remote engagements with select ASEAN Member States considering including SMRs in their nuclear power programs.

The IAEA also supports work to promote the non-power application of nuclear science and technologies to help countries achieve national development priorities. The United States is the largest contributor of extra-budgetary funds to IAEA work in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, an important demonstration of our longstanding commitment to global peaceful nuclear cooperation consistent with our obligations under Article IV of the NPT. U.S. extra-budgetary contributions to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Program and Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) support IAEA activities that assist in building national capabilities to apply nuclear techniques to meet national development goals in areas such as human and animal health, food security, and water resource management, and to address environmental issues such as climate change. Last year, the United States announced a new contribution of \$50 million to the IAEA's PUI through 2024, bringing U.S. contributions to the IAEA's PUI to a total of more than \$117 million. To date, the PUI has supported nearly 200 IAEA projects that benefit people in more than 150 IAEA Member States. In the past few years, U.S. contributions have been allocated to support IAEA programs such as the Women's Cancer Partnership Initiative and the Program of Action for Cancer Therapy, and regional projects in Asia on seafood safety, the development of electron beam and x-ray technology to enhance food safety and security and sustaining a network of veterinary diagnostic laboratories in Asia.

We believe that adopting the IAEA's Additional Protocol (AP) to a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement is an important step that states can take to strengthen IAEA safeguards and the global nuclear nonproliferation regime. We call upon all ARF participants who have not yet done so to sign and ratify the AP and, as appropriate, to modify or rescind any Small Quantities Protocol based on the original outdated model. We stand ready to help states build capacities to fully implement the AP. As noted in the November 2013 Joint ASEAN-United States Leader's Statement, the ARF also can play an important role in helping states comprehend the AP and overcome any challenges to its implementation.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, as well as illicit spread of related materials, threaten the security of the entire international community.



The United States seeks to strengthen partner capacity development and implementation of strategic trade control (STC) systems, detect and target illicit procurement networks that utilize regional ports to obtain strategic goods. Principally, the United States will continue to build key relationships and partner capacity on implementing sanctions implementation, enforcing export controls to secure the strategic supply chain, securing key ports of entry/transit, and disrupting illicit activities in the financial, cyber, and maritime shipping arenas. The United States continues to support regional workshops for ASEAN countries to help each government make tangible enhancements to the legal-regulatory foundations of their STC systems that can positively contribute to STC licensing and enforcement, as well as nonproliferation sanctions implementation. These improvements will help reduce risks of illicit proliferation in each country and throughout Southeast Asia.

An additional avenue that the United States uses to support regional approaches in addressing global proliferation challenges is raising awareness about UNSCR 1540 requirements. The resolution's provisions involve protecting WMD, their means of delivery, and related materials from unregulated acquisition by non-state actors and detecting the unregulated transfer of these goods between national borders. The United States and its main regional allies have taken measures to meet all their obligations under UNSCR 1540. These measures and their implementation continue to improve as witnessed in their submissions to the 1540 Committee and by the late 2020 updates to the Committee's National Matrices, a compilation of measures created by the Committee's experts. Additionally, the United States will continue to partner with other donor countries and entities to build capacity in those countries that request cooperation to implement UNSCR 1540. The United States has also supported efforts in the ARF toward this end and has promoted greater cooperation between the ARF and the UN Security Council 1540 Committee, to ensure that regional partners are able to fulfill their UN obligations.

One international effort that helps states to meet the goals of UNSCR 1540 is the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which to date, 107 countries have endorsed. Many ARF participants have already endorsed the PSI, profiling their concrete commitment to regional peace and security to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials in the region. Italy hosted a successful virtual Operational Experts Group (OEG) meeting in October of 2020. OEG members discussed upcoming PSI initiatives and potential multilateral opportunities with PSI endorsing countries. Singapore will be hosting, mostly virtual, the PSI Asia Pacific Exercise Rotation (APER) this fall in an ongoing effort to keep up the momentum on regional PSI efforts. The United States encourages all countries concerned with the threat WMD proliferation poses to international peace and security to endorse the PSI.

The United States continues to encourage cooperation among ASEAN members; and ARF participants to strengthen efforts to prevent the use and reemergence of chemical and biological weapons and their proliferation. The United States calls on all States Parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological Weapons Convention to support the goals of these two treaties and comply with their obligations; and to hold accountable those States Parties who blatantly violate these provisions. The United States urges support for the OPCW and its work; as well as the BWC ISU, and to further support the Universalization of both the CWC and



BWC. All ARF states must work together to preserve the international norm against the use of chemical and biological weapons; and to fully implement and adhere to the obligations under these two regimes.

The United States has partnered with ASEAN members in the past year to support implementation of UNSCRs through joint law enforcement investigations, information sharing, the exchange of expertise and best practices, and capacity building engagements. The United States has and will continue to engage public and private sector counterparts in ASEAN countries to establish and improve national- and institution-level measures to identify and disrupt illicit DPRK sanctions evasion activities, including its illicit shipping practices, abuse of the international financial system, cyber-enabled operations to steal fiat and virtual currencies, the acquisition of luxury goods, and illicit export of labor to fund its WMD programs.

iii. Transnational Crime

The United States augments the capabilities of regional actors and supports the region on a broad range of transnational crime issues through United States federal, state, and local experts and international and nonprofit organizations. These programs include capacity building for law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges to investigate and prosecute transnational crime cases, cooperate during interdiction efforts on land and in maritime environments, and to facilitate international legal cooperation. Capacity building efforts often focus on specialized topics such as combatting drug, human, and wildlife trafficking; corruption; money laundering; and financial crimes; as well as supporting reforms to implement international standards, such as the UN Convention against Corruption, the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the Budapest Cybercrime Convention. In addition, the United States has taken steps to protect the economic interaction in the region against cybercrime and intellectual property piracy, and to disrupt the financial activities of transnational criminals and facilitators.

The International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Bangkok, Thailand continues to deliver a platform for developing relationships with United States law enforcement officers through advanced training for civil law enforcement development to ASEAN member states and other members. The ILEA is an important platform to address areas of mutual concern, including transnational organized crime, cybercrime, financial crimes, corruption, and all forms of trafficking. The ILEA promote regional law enforcement networks among our partner states, builds relationships with the U.S. law enforcement community, and increases institutional capacity to address the threats and promote the rule of law. Alumni often serve at the respective countries' highest ranks in the criminal justice sector, including senior police and prosecutors, Supreme Court justices, and parliamentarians. Since 1998, ILEA Bangkok has trained over 20,000 criminal justice sector professionals throughout Southeast Asia, thus creating and strengthening international operational networks. The ILEA Bangkok alumni are part of a global ILEA alumni network of over 70,000. The United States also deploys law enforcement experts as part of a global network to deliver capacity building and strengthen international cooperation in the fight against cybercrime and intellectual property theft. Three of these International Computer Hacking and Intellectual Property Advisors -- or ICHIPs -- are deployed to assist across the Indo-Pacific, including ASEAN countries, and are located, respectively, in: Bangkok, Thailand; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, People's Republic of China.



Illicit drug production and trafficking are also challenging for all ARF member nations. There are vast networks of highly organized drug trafficking organizations that span the region and threaten regional and U.S. national security through their production and trafficking of illicit synthetic drugs and their precursors. The U.S. government supports partner nation capabilities to disrupt the use, production, and trafficking of these substances by sharing best practices for demand reduction programs and providing training to improve capacity to detect and interdict them. These efforts ensure countries can fight international drug trafficking and related criminal activities in their home countries. In 2019, the East Asia Summit leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to effectively address and counter the world drug problem through a statement on combating the spread of illicit drugs. We further encourage all countries who have not yet done so to implement the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, which constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing has direct food, economic and environmental security impacts on coastal communities and their nations' rule of law, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. The Indo-Pacific region houses the world's most productive and biodiverse marine ecosystems that provide food and income to over 200 million people in the region; however, unsustainable fishing practices threaten the region's biodiversity, food security and livelihoods. IUU-fished seafood accounts for as much as 30 percent of the global seafood harvest. In Southeast Asia, severely overfished waters in the Gulf of Thailand have made it almost impossible for vessels to operate in their historic fishing grounds. Since 1961, the average catch in Thai waters has decreased by 81 percent. Fishing operations have moved increasingly farther out to sea — and remain there for longer periods. Fisheries depletion raises the cost of fishing and exerts downward pressure on wages. Fewer people are willing to work under these conditions, which promotes human trafficking for fishing operations.

To further the fight against IUU fishing, the United States is working with international partners to improve global fisheries enforcement by strengthening efforts to detect, identify, interdict, and adjudicate illegal fishing activity and the illicit networks that support it through enhanced cooperation and information-sharing. In 2018 and again in 2019, the United States and Indonesia co-chaired workshops on law enforcement coordination and maritime data analysis tactics and techniques to identify unusual and potentially illegal fishing and vessel activity to enable countries to utilize analytical tools and processes to combat IUU fishing and crime that may be associated with IUU fishing. Another model of this type of effort is the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI), a partnership between the United States Coast Guard, Navy, and local law enforcement agencies in Oceania. OMSI bolsters maritime domain awareness, increases law enforcement presence and expands at-sea law enforcement capabilities by matching available Navy ships with Coast Guard law enforcement expertise and local enforcement authorities.

To combat IUU fishing, advance sustainable fisheries, and conserve marine biodiversity across Southeast Asia, USAID Sustainable Fish Asia (SuFiA) supports the development, adoption, and implementation of regional sustainable fisheries policies, standards, and regulatory frameworks in the Indo-Pacific. SuFiA will promote the leadership and goals of regional organizations that advance sustainable fisheries management and counter IUU fishing in Southeast Asia. SuFiA



also works in partnership with regional fisheries management organizations and the private sector to accelerate the implementation of fair-labor standards and sustainable fishing practices. In particular, SuFiA works in close collaboration with the Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) to strengthen their organizational capacities so that they can provide their member states with the leadership and services needed to support sustainable regional marine and fisheries ecosystems in Southeast Asia. Further, SuFiA works with the U.S. Government Interagency and Southeast Asia's regional organizations to understand and address the impact of illegal fishing by nationals of other countries trespassing in the region. In addition, and in coordination with the ASEAN Senior Labor Officials, the U.S. Department of Labor is developing programming to implement recommendations identified in the USAID-supported study to advance a regional, multi-sectoral strategy that addresses human trafficking and forced labor in the fishing industry. Specifically, the Addressing Labor Exploitation in Fishing in ASEAN (ALFA) project will strengthen the capacity of ASEAN sectoral bodies and member countries to coordinate and collaborate to address forced labor and abusive working conditions in the region's fishing industry. ALFA will focus on ASEAN regional policy implementation, and increased engagement with the private sector, worker organizations, and civil society to mitigate forced labor and trafficking, and improve working conditions for a more sustainable, responsible and resilient fishing sector.

The Oceans project, supported by USAID, strengthens regional cooperation to combat IUU fishing, promotes sustainable fisheries and conserves marine biodiversity in the Asia-Pacific region. Through this project, the US works with public and private sector partners to strengthen electronic catch documentation and traceability (eCDT) that ensures fisheries resources are legally caught and properly labeled. The USG and partners trained over 1,200 regional stakeholders across 12 ASEAN and Coral Triangle countries in program technical areas, including electronic catch documentation and traceability, sustainable fisheries management, public-private partnership development, and human welfare and gender equity. The partnership has leveraged over \$1.4 million in public and private sector partner funding for increased sustainability of program interventions, including from the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch, Thai Union, and Inmarsat. In addition, the USG is conducting comprehensive research to identify and assess opportunities for ASEAN to support the advancement of a regional multi-sectoral strategy to address the challenges associated with forced labor in the fishing industry and to propose ways in which development partners might best support those opportunities. The report from the study is currently under review and it will be finalized this year so the consideration for recommended interventions for ASEAN can be proposed in 2021.

In collaboration with the Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center, USAID supported a workshop to explore how existing catch documentation and seafood traceability data could be exchanged within the region to prevent illegitimate trade.

The United States commends progress on the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP), especially for women and children, which entered into force on March 8, 2017, following ratification by the Philippines. We urge all remaining member states to follow the lead of those who have already ratified and promptly deposit instruments of ratification. We also encourage all countries to ratify and to implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. The United States and ASEAN



enjoy a strong partnership on combating trafficking in persons – a partnership that we look forward to continuing. We seek to continue this partnership and have presented proposals for future collaboration to the SOMTC. We are still committed to assisting member states in developing and implementing victim compensation schemes and funds, as prescribed under ACTIP. The USG continues to support ASEAN on the implementation of the ACTIP through its technical cooperation on developing the ASEAN Regional Guidelines and Procedures to Address the Needs of Victims of TIP, which was launched in April 2019. In collaboration with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), USAID supported the drafting of a Regional Model Toolkit to provide guidance to practitioners across ASEAN. The toolkit is now translated into six ASEAN countries' languages (Burmese, Indonesia, Khmer, Laotian, Thai, and Vietnamese) and pilot studies are underway in some member states to develop a strategic approach to formalize and adapt the toolkit at the national level.

Through the USAID regional Asia Counter Trafficking in Persons (ASIA CTIP) program and country-specific activities in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and the Philippines, the USG addresses transnational and regional challenges to combat trafficking in persons, building upon existing USG-supported CTIP activities in the region. The program strengthens regional platforms for governments, NGOs, and service providers to effectively cooperate across borders and ensures that assistance and support can be provided and accessed in source, transit and destination countries. USAID also partners with the private sector, including prominent American companies, to promote industry-wide adoption of practices that reduce opportunities and incentives for cheap, exploited, and trafficked labor. The Asia CTIP program also builds the evidence base by conducting and sharing CTIP-related research and knowledge in key areas.

We encourage all countries to ratify and to implement the Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

ARF Dialogue Partners experience a variety of natural disasters, such as typhoons, floods, and earthquakes, as well as manmade crises, including civil conflict, which often result in significant financial and human costs. In response to these events, the United States continues to provide humanitarian assistance to affected populations in the region, while simultaneously working to reduce disaster vulnerability in communities and building national, provincial-level, and local response capacities.

In Pakistan, USAID/Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance's (BHA) focus over recent years has been on disaster preparedness and rapid response efforts as well as early recovery from crises that continue to erode household-level food security and coping capacity among Pakistan's most vulnerable populations. BHA has provided nearly \$7.5 million in active programming in early recovery, risk reduction, and resilience activities. Three BHA partners, Concern Worldwide, WFP and Concern are addressing food assistance through cash-for-work and livelihoods support in Sindh province and capacity building for local disaster response organizations in Khyber Pakhtunwala.



In addition, BHA funded regional programs are also operational in Pakistan. The Asia Disaster Preparedness Center, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) and international Medical Corps are implementing programs to enhance the availability and accessibility of early warning information to reduce exposure to climate risks and build the local capacity to better coordinate within the humanitarian system and prepare for and respond more effectively to emergency situations.

For example, in Myanmar, USAID/BHA supports food assistance, both locally and regionally purchased food, as well as cash based-transfers to conflict-affected persons and other vulnerable communities in Rakhine, Kachin, and Northern Shan. Following the February 2021 military coup d'état, BHA partner, the World Food Program expanded their assistance to include newly emerging conflict areas, including Chin, Kayin, Kayah, Sagaing, and Magway. USAID/BHA's support through WFP also includes targeted distributions of fortified blended foods to children under five and pregnant and lactating women. In FY 2021, USAID/BHA provided \$49.7 million in to meet critical humanitarian needs of IDPs and other vulnerable groups in Myanmar. Assistance includes health, nutrition, food, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and settlements, and protection services, as well as support for COVID-19 prevention and response efforts.

To mitigate the effects of future disasters on vulnerable populations, the United States supports disaster risk reduction (DRR) programs aimed at saving lives; protecting livelihoods, assets, and infrastructure before, during, and after a disaster; and increasing community resilience to natural hazards. USAID/BHA's DRR interventions also promote self-reliance, enabling partner countries to lessen the impacts of natural hazards and respond more effectively when disasters strike. The United States supports regional and country specific DRR programs. For example, the U.S. Department of State, INDOPACOM, and USAID/BHA, collaborate on support to the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management and the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance (AHA) Centre by building its capacity for disaster monitoring and response. In 2019, the USG through USAID supported the AHA Centre to establish and convene a working group for disaster management training and curriculum development, manage disaster-related information, develop assessment tools, and assist in the development of a Regional Joint Disaster Response Plan. As part of our cooperation with the AHA Centre, USAID also provides critical training in such areas as English language skills for international disaster response coordination and logistics for the procurement and transport of emergency relief supplies, all to increase the timeliness, effectiveness, and efficiency of emergency response in the region. In 2019, USAID, in partnership with the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, and the U.S Embassy Regional English Language Office - Jakarta helped deliver the AHA Centre's English Language Training for ASEAN on Disaster Management. Nineteen disaster management professionals from all ten ASEAN Member States participated to strengthen capacity in technical-language driven communications necessary to coordinate disaster response and management. In 2021, to further strengthen ASEAN's regional disaster management capacity USAID is partnering with AHA Centre to support the development of a humanitarian logistics training program for the National Disaster Management Organizations and assess ASEAN capacity for multi-hazard end-to-end early warning systems for natural disasters.

The United States sponsors and/or participates in numerous HA/DR-related exercises with regional partners every year, including the ARF Disaster Relief Exercise, East Asia Summit



(EAS) HA/DR Exercise, the ADMM-Plus HA/DR, exercise Cobra Gold with Thailand, exercise Balikatan with the Philippines, Gema Bhakti with Indonesia, and Angkor Sentinel with Cambodia. In addition, the United States sponsored Disaster Relief Exercise and Exchanges (DREEs) through the Lower Mekong Initiative, further enhancing multi-lateral coordination, communication, and cooperation among the United States, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam to enhance response readiness to natural disasters in the Lower Mekong region.

2019 culminated over three years of cumulative and collaborative efforts of the United States and Malaysia co-chairing the most robust exercise of its kind ever to be executed. The exercise tested a real-world scenario utilizing actual communications methods and coordination processes with a crosscutting group of civil and military stakeholders across the 18 ADMM-Plus countries, the humanitarian community, and regional and international organizations. As a result, the USG demonstrated its commitment to the Indo Pacific region, and tangibly and practically advanced One ASEAN One Response, alliances, and partnerships. The United States remains committed to developing ASEAN HA/DR capabilities and streamlining the ASEAN response mechanism. As part of the United States commitment to advancing civil - military coordination in ASEAN and throughout the Asia Pacific region, we recognize the need to further synchronize the defense efforts of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus with the civilian-led efforts in the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and by the AHA Centre. We see this as a critical step toward realizing the vision of 'One ASEAN, One Response,' and we look forward to furthering these efforts in collaboration.

v. Maritime Security

The Indo-Pacific region and its maritime waterways are critical to U.S. security. Together with our interagency colleagues and regional allies and partners, the United States strives to ensure that the Indo-Pacific will remain open, free, and secure in the decades ahead. To protect free and open access, the United States focuses on three objectives: safeguarding the freedom of the seas, deterring conflict and coercion, and promoting adherence to international law and standards.

The United States has, throughout its history, advocated for the freedom of the seas and airspace. Freedom of the seas includes more than the mere freedom of commercial vessels to transit through international waterways. It also includes all the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea and airspace for military ships and aircraft as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. The United States will continue to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows, as U.S. forces currently do all around the world.

For 70 years, U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific region has played a vital role in undergirding regional peace, stability, and security. We note several continuing trends, including rapid military modernization, growing resource demands, and territorial and maritime disputes, that have the potential to create instability. Many countries across the region are significantly enhancing their naval and maritime law enforcement (MLE) capabilities. Although most nations are using these capabilities in a responsible manner, ongoing provocative actions continue to heighten tensions in the region and raise concerns. Actions such as the use of MLE vessels to coerce rival claimants, and unsafe air and maritime behavior raise the risk of miscalculation or conflict. Maritime vessels are also increasingly being used to traffic terrorists and illicit materials.



Increased screening measures and controls, such as those identified in UNSCR 2396 on foreign fighters, are needed to deter illicit and terrorist use of the maritime sector.

The tensions arising from maritime and territorial disputes in the Indo-Pacific are deeply concerning to the United States. The Indian Ocean, East China Sea, and South China Sea are all vital thoroughfares for global commerce and energy. Well over half the world's merchant tonnage flows through the South China Sea, and over 15 million barrels of oil per day transited the Strait of Malacca last year, with most of it continuing onward through the East China Sea to three of the world's largest economies – Japan, the Republic of Korea, and China.

Regarding the South China Sea, the United States has a vital national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, respect for international law, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peace and stability. The United States insists that such that disputes should be resolved peacefully, without the use of force or coercion, and in accordance with international law. To that end, we urge claimant countries to conform all their maritime claims to international law as reflected in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention.

China's efforts to assert its unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea threaten the regional rules-based order and undermine international law. China's provocative reclamation and militarization of disputed outposts in the South China Sea, and its attempts to coerce and intimidate other nations undermine regional stability. The United States will continue to stand with Southeast Asian claimants in resisting the PRC's efforts through the People's Armed Forces Maritime Militia (PAFMM) to push its unlawful maritime claims and will continue to protest these claims in the UN and call out PRC actions that intimidate and bully other claimants from accessing their lawful marine resources. The United States urges all claimants, including China, to manage and resolve disputes peacefully and in accordance with international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. The United States encourages all parties to employ diplomatic and other peaceful avenues for resolving disagreements, including the use of third-party dispute settlement, such as arbitration, negotiation, multilateral fora, or other peaceful international mechanisms. In this regard, the United States takes note of the importance of the July 12, 2016, arbitral tribunal ruling in the China-Philippines arbitration, and notes that it could serve as a useful basis for claimants to resolve their overlapping maritime claims.

On negotiations towards an ASEAN-China South China Sea Code of Conduct (CoC), we will continue to advocate for a meaningful CoC that is fully in accordance with international law. Although not all ASEAN Member States are South China Sea claimants, we support ASEAN's ongoing efforts to negotiate a meaningful and effective CoC that is fully in accordance with international law. We are concerned, however, at reports that China has been pressing ASEAN member states – behind closed doors – to accept limits on with whom states may conduct military exercises and offshore energy development. These proposals put at risk the autonomy of ASEAN states and pose a direct challenge to the interests of the broader international community, including the United States. The United States urges all negotiating parties to ensure that rights and interests of third parties are respected and that any eventual CoC be crafted in full accordance with international law.

In the East China Sea, we remain concerned about the provocative behavior by the PRC. We support calls for diplomacy and crisis management procedures to avoid a miscalculation or a dangerous incident.

We further believe the ARF can help put in-place supportive diplomatic structures that lower tensions and help claimant states manage these disputes peacefully. This forum needs to play an increasingly important role in reinforcing international law and practice and in building practical cooperation among member states.

The United States is not standing still considering the challenges we face in the maritime domain. There should be no doubt that the United States will employ whole of government resources that includes maintaining military presence and capabilities to protect our interests and those of our allies and partners against potential threats in the maritime domain.

The Department of Defense is pursuing several efforts in support of maritime security:

1. Work together with our allies and partners from Northeast Asia to the Indian Ocean to build their maritime capacity.
 - The United States Navy and Coast Guard are building greater interoperability and developing more integrated operations, actions, and activities with our regional allies and partners.
 - The United States Pacific Fleet is increasing the size, frequency, and sophistication of their regional exercise program, with a particular focus on increasing the operational exercise complexity with Southeast Asian partners and expanding the multilateral exercise program.
 - The United States has also implemented a Southeast Asia Maritime Security Initiative that enable training and exercises, personnel support, and national level subject matter experts on maritime domain awareness to enhance capabilities for our partners in Southeast Asia.
2. Leverage defense diplomacy to build greater transparency, reduce the risk of miscalculation or conflict, and promote shared maritime rules of the road.
 - The United States is actively seeking to mitigate risks in the Indo-Pacific region, both through bilateral efforts with China, as well as region-wide risk reduction measures.
 - The United States Navy and China's Ministry of National Defense have a Memorandum of Understanding on Rules of Behavior for Safety of Air and Maritime Encounters. This MOU currently includes annexes on ship-to-ship and air-to-air encounters.
 - United States Navy and People's Liberation Army-Navy (PLA-N) vessels have also successfully employed the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) during recent interactions, which reduce risk in the region and demonstrate cooperativeness on the seas.
3. Strengthen regional security institutions and encourage the development of an open and effective regional security architecture.
 - The United States is enhancing its engagement in ASEAN-based institutions such as the ARF, ADMM-Plus, Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) and the EAS. The United States promotes candid conversations about ongoing challenges in the maritime domain and encourages greater information sharing and cooperative solutions.
 - The United States, in partnership with our Quad partners, will implement the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) with regional partners to offer a near-real-time, integrated, and cost-effective maritime domain awareness picture. This initiative will transform the ability of partners in the Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean region to fully monitor the waters on their shores and, in turn, to uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific.



In addition to Department of Defense efforts on the seas, the United States regularly conducts maritime exercises with regional partners to build confidence and to enhance regional maritime readiness. Cooperative activities such as the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT), Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training (SEACAT), and the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise foster bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region. These are just a few of several engagements aimed to develop cooperation, promote common seafaring practices, and enhance mutual trust.

Additionally, the United States participated in its fourth Governors' Council meeting with the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) since becoming the organization's 20th contracting party (member) in 2014. The United States has been proactive in assisting the development of a ten-year strategy plan for the future of ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) to become a Centre of Excellence by 2020. The United States is also working with regional partners to improve the safety and well-being of mariners through the Expanded ASEAN Seafarers Training on Counter-Piracy (EAST-CP) program. The United States is enhancing the capacity of the coast guards, navies, and law enforcement and judicial sectors of partner nations to address not only piracy, but also the broad scope of illicit maritime activity ranging from illegal fishing to the trafficking of arms, narcotics, and people. Training and technical expertise are delivered through a variety of cooperative training programs supported by the United States Departments of Defense, Justice, and State, NOAA, the United States Coast Guard, and USAID. The workshops incorporate the knowledge of technical experts in the maritime transport sector and regional survivors of piracy to address issues ranging from preparedness and survival, ransom negotiations, to post trauma care upon returning home.

4. Strengthen U.S. naval capacity to ensure the United States can successfully deter conflict and coercion and respond decisively when needed.
 - The United States Navy is investing in new cutting-edge capabilities, deploying our finest maritime capabilities forward, and distributing these capabilities more widely across the region.
 - The United States Navy will increase the size of the United States Pacific Fleet's overseas assigned forces by approximately 30 percent over the next five years to maintain a higher tempo of routine and persistent maritime presence activities across the Pacific region.
5. Work together with our allies and partners from Northeast Asia to the Indian Ocean to to build their maritime capacity.
 - The United States Navy and Coast Guard are building greater interoperability and developing more integrated operations, actions, and activities with our regional allies and partners.
 - The United States Pacific Fleet is increasing the size, frequency, and sophistication of their regional exercise program, with a particular focus on increasing the operational exercise complexity with Southeast Asian partners and expanding the multilateral exercise program.
 - The United States Navy has also implemented a Southeast Asia Maritime Security Initiative that enable training and exercises, personnel support, and national level

subject matter experts on maritime domain awareness to enhance capabilities for our partners in Southeast Asia.

6. Leverage defense diplomacy to build greater transparency, reduce the risk of miscalculation or conflict, and promote shared maritime rules of the road.
 - The United States Navy is actively seeking to mitigate risks in the Indo-Pacific region, both through bilateral efforts with China, as well as region-wide risk reduction measures.
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In addition to United States Navy and Coast Guard lines of efforts on the seas, the United States regularly conducts maritime exercises with regional partners to build confidence and to enhance regional maritime readiness. Cooperative activities such as the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) and the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise foster bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region. In February 2017, the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) participated in the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) with the United States Coast Guard's 14th District in the western Pacific Ocean. OMSI is a joint maritime security operation designed to enhance maritime domain awareness, increase law enforcement presence, and expand at-sea law enforcement capabilities throughout Oceania. During the exercise, sailors had the privilege of working side by side with an elite Coast Guard Law Enforcement team. The team provided invaluable training to Murphy's Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) team to include tactical team movements, tactical combat casualty care, and safe boarding techniques. These are just a few of several engagements aimed to develop cooperation, promote common seafaring practices, and enhance mutual trust.

Additionally, the United States participated in its fourth Governors' Council meeting with the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) since becoming the organization's 20th contracting party (member) in 2014. The United States has been proactive in assisting the development of a ten-year strategy plan for the future of ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) to become a Centre of Excellence by 2020. The United States is also working with regional partners to improve the safety and well-being of mariners through the Expanded ASEAN Seafarers Training on Counter-Piracy (EAST-CP) program. The United States is enhancing the capacity of the coast guards, navies, and law enforcement and judicial sectors of partner nations to address not only piracy, but



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vi. Information and Communications Technologies

The speed and efficiency of information and communication technologies (ICTs) are of great benefit to commerce and development. At the same time, ICTs introduce vulnerabilities that countries must proactively address, as the risks can impact national and regional security and economic prosperity – especially in Asia, where e-commerce is a significant and increasing portion of many developing countries' economic growth. In a cyber-incident of national significance, the unique nature of the ICTs, including the lack of external observables of ICTs and the difficulty in determining the nation or entity responsible, may lead states to act precipitously, with significant consequences for strategic ICT stability and international security. To reduce the risk of conflict stemming from ICT incidents, practical confidence building measures (CBMs) are needed to enhance the predictability of state activities and reduce national security risks. This can be achieved by fostering transparency, increasing cybersecurity cooperation, and developing incident response capacity within and among states. These practical measures in the form of CBMs can help reduce the risk of conflict.

In the interest of increasing ARF's budding Preventive Diplomacy role and promoting regional cyber stability, the United States welcomes the establishment of the ISM on ICTs Security and supports continued ARF dialogue on enhancing international ICT stability via the 2015 ARF Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of ICTs. We support further institutionalization of cyber work within the ARF, the development and implementation of cyber CBMs in the ARF and continued ARF discussion on preventive diplomacy's role in cyberspace. The United States will cooperate with other ARF Participants on the development of relevant cyber workshops and projects in 2018 to support the ARF Work Plan.

III. Role of the ARF

a. National Contributions to Enhancing the ARF and Regional Security

The United States remains committed to building institutional capacity in the ARF and strengthening its role in the ASEAN-centered regional security architecture. The United States remains committed to the full and complete implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action 2020-2025 and will work diligently with ARF participants to fulfill the ARF's mandate to advance from confidence-building measures to preventive diplomacy, to effective conflict resolution.

The United States will also continue to work with ASEAN to strengthen and build capacity in the ARF Unit – a critical element of process sustainment and administrative protocol. A reinforced ARF Unit will benefit ASEAN members and all ARF dialogue partners as the engine of a credible and results-oriented organization.



b. Future of the ARF

The ARF serves as an important venue for senior-level security policy dialogue and working-level technical cooperation on regional security issues. The ARF's inclusiveness, maturing commitments, and growing experience position it to achieve success on a targeted agenda that addresses common issues of interest for all ARF participants. However, its participants should take deliberate steps toward shaping the ARF into an institution that faces important security challenges candidly and head-on, with the capability to conduct effective Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, and inclusive of women, youth, and civil society. Furthermore, continued military assertiveness and militarization within the region highlight the urgent need for the ARF to go beyond just providing confidence-building measures. In this regard, the United States supports efforts to develop the ARF's Preventive Diplomacy capability together with the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR).

It is important to highlight the context of the ARF as one element of a broader regional security architecture that includes the EAS, ADMM-Plus, and the EAMF. The United States is committed to continuing its engagement to help shape a robust and coherent architecture in the Indo-Pacific region – including a key role for the ARF in promoting stability and prosperity – through a transparent and inclusive process. Developing rules-based frameworks for dialogue and cooperation will help maintain stability and economic growth while resolving disputes through diplomacy are especially important in a region facing territorial and maritime disputes, political transformation, political and civil unrest, and pandemic disease response and recovery, and natural disasters. The United States is committed to building on its active and enduring presence in the Indo-Pacific region and working with its partners to support the ARF as an effective mechanism for confronting current and future transnational and emerging security issues troubling the region.



I. Overview of Regional Security Environment

Over the past year, the regional strategic landscape has undergone complex and fast-changing developments. While emerging non-traditional security threats, especially the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change continue to take their tolls on the region, major power rivalry and the increasing tendencies of military build-up and arms race are posing enormous challenges to the regional security environment.

Through several waves of COVID-19 infection, ASEAN and its regional partners have managed to forge cooperation to keep the pandemic under control and quickly adapted to sustained management and “living safely with COVID-19”. However, threats of new COVID-19 variants, supply chain disruption, a surge in inflation and key commodity prices, the ongoing armed conflicts in other parts of the world, etc. have put further risks on the regional economic recovery process and security landscape.

Geopolitical shift to Asia-Pacific and the wider Indo-Pacific region continues, coupled with heightened strategic competition among major powers. In this context, ASEAN has consistently maintained its unity, centrality as well as a balanced approach to engagement with external partners in line with its fundamental principles and norms, including those stated in the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific Region (AOIP).

Regional flashpoints have also witnessed new and complicated developments. The situation in South China Sea (East Sea) continues to witness concerning activities, land reclamation, militarisation, serious violations of the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of coastal states as well as incidents that have caused damage to the marine environment. This has further eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and undermined peace, security and stability in the region.

It is, therefore, important to uphold international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 (UNCLOS), which sets out the legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas. All parties concerned must continue to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, especially the 1982 UNCLOS, exercise self-restraint, not to use or threaten to use force, and refrain from actions that may further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea. ASEAN and China should expedite efforts to fully and effectively implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and work towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

The current situation in Myanmar remains a challenge to ASEAN unity, credibility and centrality. In this regard, the ASEAN family remains committed to helping Myanmar, an integral member of ASEAN, through the implementation of the Five Point Consensus to seek out a viable solution to the current crisis in the interest of the Myanmar people. ASEAN will also continue to coordinate, through the AHA Centre and with the support of external partners, humanitarian assistance to Myanmar in a timely manner.

The concerning military conflict in Ukraine has caused massive impacts on the peace, security, stability and development of the world. In this regard, it is imperative that conflict be settled by peaceful means in accordance with the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international law and that there is decreasing of tensions, implementation of ceasefire and resumption of dialogue towards a durable solution, taking to account the legitimate rights of all parties concerned. There must also be emphasis on the need to ensure the safety and security for humanitarian activities.

Non-traditional security issues such as maritime security, climate change, health security, water security, food security energy security, etc. are increasingly threatening the security of states and livelihood of the peoples in the region. Tackling these issues requires proper allocation of resources, and enhanced cooperation and coordination both at the regional and subregional levels, including through ASEAN-led mechanisms and frameworks. ASEAN and its external partners should continue working together to strengthen ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ARF, EAS, ADMM Plus, etc. to enhance their relevance and capability in response to the incumbent challenges.

II. National Security and Defense Policy of Viet Nam

1. Overview of National Defense Policy

The overall goal of Viet Nam's national defense is to strongly defend the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Homeland; to protect national interests and people; and to maintain political stability and a peaceful environment for national construction and development. Viet Nam implements a defense policy that is peaceful and self-defensive in nature; Viet Nam resolutely and consistently settles all disputes and divergences through peaceful means on the basis of international law; actively and proactively prevents and repulses the risk of war, realises the motto of defending the Homeland from afar; and is prepared to fight against wars of aggression.

Viet Nam consistently rejects joining any military alliances; siding with one country against another; giving any country permission to set up military bases or use its territory to carry out military activities against another country or using force or threatening to use force in international relations. At the same time, Viet Nam promotes defense cooperation with other countries to improve its capabilities to protect the country, address common security challenges, and contribute to maintaining peace, stability and security in the Asia-Pacific. Depending circumstances and specific conditions, Viet Nam will consider developing necessary defense and military relations on an appropriate level with other countries on the basis of respecting each other's independence, sovereignty, territorial unity and integrity as well as the fundamental principles of international law, cooperation for mutual benefits and common interests of the region and international community.

Viet Nam opposes arms race. As a responsible member of the international community, Viet Nam is keen on fulfilling its duties while actively cooperating with other countries to address emerging security issues, contributing to the protection of peace and stability in the region and the world.



2. Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

Viet Nam builds its military potential according to a unified strategy as required by the tasks of national defense and construction. The combat competency and readiness of the armed forces are expressed in their organisational structure, weaponry, military art, science and technology, logistics warranty facilities, which are usually maintained, improved and developed to meet the requirements of the people's war for safeguarding the Homeland.

Viet Nam's defense budget is in line with the country's socio-economic development speed, meeting the requirements of strengthening defense potentials for protecting the Homeland, but not becoming a burden on the country's economy.

III. National Contributions to the Regional Security:

a. Maritime Security

Viet Nam's 2019 Defense White Paper explains: "As a maritime nation, Viet Nam always pays special attention to maritime security, ensuring that Viet Nam's seas are safe, friendly, and strictly controlled. Viet Nam always observes international law and supports the protection of free trade, freedom of navigation and overflight, and peaceful economic activities at sea."

At sea, we are faced with both traditional and non-traditional security challenges. Terrorism and criminal acts, especially organized crime, have been expanding in scope and complexity. Climate change, sea level rise and pollution of the marine environment, especially by plastic debris and degradation of the marine ecosystem, have caused serious and long-term consequences. Unilateral acts that violate international law, even threats or uses of force, have escalated tensions and affected peace, friendship, security, safety, and freedom of navigation and trade, as well as efforts to address non-traditional security challenges. Therefore, preserving and enhancing maritime security is in the common interest, and has become an urgent task and shared responsibility of the entire international community.

Viet Nam is deeply aware of the value of the sea as well as the challenges posed to maritime security. Viet Nam persistently adopts a foreign policy of peace, independence, self-reliance, multilateralization and diversification of international relations; is a friend and a reliable partner with all countries in the world and a responsible member of the international community. Viet Nam is willing to cooperate with countries in the region and around the world in efforts to solve maritime security issues, actively contribute to maintaining a peaceful environment, promoting sustainable development in the region, and promoting sustainable development in the region and the world.

Viet Nam upholds international law, especially the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982 UNCLOS) in solving maritime security issues as the Convention sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector, and that its integrity needs to be maintained.

Viet Nam has made various positive steps in contribution to the maintenance and promotion of peace, stability, security, safety and freedom of navigation and overflight as well as marine environmental protection in the South China Sea; building and consolidating strategic trust among countries; actively supporting the promotion of a rules-based maritime order and the settlement of disputes through peaceful means on the basis of international law, especially the 1982 UNCLOS; coordinating with other countries on the full and effective implementation of the DOC, actively participating in and substantively contributing to the process of COC negotiation to work towards the early conclusion of a substantive, effective COC in line with international law, including 1982 UNCLOS.

Viet Nam regularly engages and continues to attach great importance to regional cooperation to ensure maritime security through many ASEAN-led frameworks such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM-MS), ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting/Plus (ADMM/+), ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF). These are strategic dialogue channels for ASEAN and between ASEAN and dialogue partners to exchange views as well as identify mechanisms and policies for cooperation in dealing with maritime security.

Within the framework of the ARF, Viet Nam promoted maritime cooperation efforts by co-chairing the 4th ARF Workshop on Enhancing Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation in April 2022. Currently, Viet Nam is working with Australia and the European Union to propose a 4th ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other international instruments to address emerging maritime issues.

Bilaterally, Viet Nam has been closely coordinating with maritime law enforcement agencies of regional countries to conduct a number of practical cooperation activities, such as delegations exchange, information sharing, joint training courses for capacity building, etc.

b. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR)

Viet Nam promotes Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) cooperation through various multilateral as well as bilateral mechanisms.

Viet Nam actively participates in the activities and initiatives in the field of HADR within the ASEAN and ASEAN-led frameworks, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM-DR), the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR, ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on HADR. Through these regional mechanisms, Viet Nam conducts and participates in disaster management training courses to improve management, coordination and response capabilities; contributes in the establishment of mechanisms for exchanging natural disaster warning and forecasting information; as well as strengthens the support and transfer of search and rescue facilities and equipment.

With regard to emergency disaster and pandemic/epidemic response, Viet Nam continues to contribute to the strengthening of existing mechanisms, namely the ASEAN Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Network, the ASEAN Risk Assessment and Risk Communication Centre, the ASEAN BioDiaspora Virtual Center (ABVC) and the ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian



Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) in efforts to enhance ASEAN's joint response to emergency needs. Within the framework of the ARF Inter-Sessional Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy, Viet Nam along with the United States and Canada successfully co-chaired the Hybrid ARF Workshop on Health Security and Pandemic Response and Recovery: Lessons Learned During the COVID-19 Pandemic from 4-6 May 2022 in Guam, USA, which contributed to facilitation of dialogue and country sharing on the lessons learned during COVID-19 as well as application in order to prevent and response to future outbreaks of infectious diseases.

In terms of bilateral cooperation, Viet Nam maintains close cooperation with partners in efforts to heighten and improve humanitarian support and disaster relief capacity. On 30 June 2021, the Viet Nam Disaster Management Authority (VNDMA) in coordination with the US Embassy in Vietnam organized an online Workshop on Technical Cooperation on Disaster Management. On 9 December 2021, the military medical units of Viet Nam and China held a training session and rehearsed exercises on humanitarian assistance and medical relief.

c. Counter-terrorism

Viet Nam resolutely condemns and opposes all forms of terrorism, terrorist sponsorship and breeding, and opposes all kinds of interference in internal affairs of other countries under the name of counter-terrorism. Viet Nam supports the international community's cooperative efforts and expands cooperation to prevent terrorist activity in conformity with international law and the UN Charter as well as Viet Nam's Constitution, law and conditions.

Viet Nam has reaffirmed its commitment to the joint efforts of the international community to combat terrorism through its participation in many international and multilateral fora. In the framework of the UN, on 16 June 2021, Viet Nam co-organized a virtual Arria-formula meeting on "The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on International Efforts to Prevent and Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism" with Tunisia, Estonia, France, Ireland, Kenya, Niger, Norway, Saint Vincent, the Grenadines and the UK. At the meeting, Viet Nam stressed the need to address the fundamental causes of terrorism via economic growth, national reconciliation, and the establishment of a society that is just, tolerant, and self-resisting against terrorism and extremism. As a non-permanent member of the UNSC, Viet Nam advocated for unity in the fight against terrorism, notably at the "UNSC Briefing on ISIL/Da'esh", "UNSC's Meeting on G5 Sahel Joint Force", and "UNSC's virtual Arria-formula Meeting on Humanitarian Action: Overcoming Challenges in Situations of Armed Conflict and Counter-terrorism Preparations" ...

At the regional level, Viet Nam has boosted cooperation in counter-terrorism by proactively and actively participating in ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM-CTTC), the SOMTC Working Group on Counter-Terrorism as well as mechanisms within the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ASEAN Defense Minister' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) frameworks, which include the ASEAN Our Eyes Initiative (AOE), Virtual Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Defense Experts and ADMM-Plus Experts Working Groups on Counter Terrorism.

Domestically, Viet Nam has employed a wide range of measures to implement its international obligations in the prevention and control of money laundering and terrorism financing. In 2021, Viet Nam began drafting regulations on sanctioning violations in the field of prize-games, headed by the Ministry of Finance, which included various new provisions on money laundering and terrorism financing in the field of prize-games. On 15 July 2021, the Ministry of Finance enacted Decision No. 787/QD-BTC promulgating a plan to implement the project “Improving the effectiveness of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing activities”.

d. Transnational Crime

Viet Nam reaffirms its commitment to promote regional and international cooperation to prevent and combat transnational crime and continues to strengthen cooperation with external partners in the field of capacity building, language training for law enforcement officers, and technical equipment and facilities support as well as proactive and effective coordination in the form of bilateral patrol activities with the management forces of neighboring countries...

Within the framework of AMMTC, Viet Nam proposed the Establishment of a Direct Communication Link (DCL) to enable timely exchange of transnational crime information and cases and establish operational procedures to handle relevant incidents in emergency situations. At the 15th AMMTC on 29 September 2021, Viet Nam along with fellow ASEAN countries agreed to realise the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime (2016-2025); adopted the ASEAN Statement on Post-Pandemic Trans-national Crime Prevention and Control; as well as expanded cooperation on fighting transnational crime through AMMTC+ frameworks with China, Japan and ROK.

Regarding illicit drugs, Viet Nam has amended the Law on Drug Prevention and Control to effectively respond to recent developments in drug crimes; preventing illegal trans-border drug trafficking by land, waterway, and air; disseminating anti-drug programs; diversifying rehabilitation models for drug addicts and strictly controlling illegal drug-related activities. Viet Nam's Ministry of Public Security (MPS) implemented two plans on Fighting Organized and Transnational Crimes for the period 2021 – 2025.

Viet Nam has been actively engaging in multilateral and regional mechanism in combating illicit drugs such as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD) and ASEAN Chiefs of Police Conference (ASEANAPOL) and firmly supports ASEAN's persistent stance on working towards a Drug-Free Community. At the 7th AMMD, held virtually on 14 October 2021, Viet Nam contributed to the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025. Viet Nam has also implemented the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle 2020-2022, committed to the International Drug Control Conventions, and participated in activities of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) in realizing the goal of a drug-free region.

With respect to human trafficking, Viet Nam is committed to cooperating with other countries in preventing and addressing this issue. Currently, Viet Nam is a member of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (TOC), the ASEAN Convention on the



Prevention and Combat of Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (ACTIP Convention), as well as the Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of Trafficking in Persons, **especially Women and Children...**

In terms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, Viet Nam maintains agreements with Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, China and the UK on the prevention and combatting of human trafficking. Viet Nam regularly briefed on its policies and achievements in this field at the Human Rights Dialogue with partners, which included the EU and Australia. Within the framework of ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking (ASEAN-ACT), Viet Nam hosted a three-day training program and chaired a discussion on ASEAN-ACT 2020-2023 cooperation in July 2021.

e. Non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control, disarmament

In realizing its policy of supporting and contributing to the common efforts of the international community for peace, security and disarmament, Viet Nam welcomes any initiatives that prevent the development, production, stockpiling and use of weapons of mass destruction as well as commits to fulfilling obligations of a signing party to conventions, agreements, protocols on non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament .

Viet Nam has remained steadfast in its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament by playing an active role in regional and international mechanisms. At the UN level, Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy, Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the UN, reiterated Viet Nam's policy on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament while addressing a session of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on 28 September 2021; in which he urged those States, which had not yet signed and ratified the Treaty, notably the Annex 2 States, to do so in the interests of mankind and the environment. As the rotating President of the UNSC in April 2021, Viet Nam pushed for the adoption of the Presidential Statement S/PRST/2021/08 on Mine Action, which calls on all UN member states and related agencies to continue providing support for affected countries.

Regionally, through a wide range of ASEAN mechanisms such as ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, SOMTC Working Group on Arms Smuggling, the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), Viet Nam has reaffirmed its support to promote ASEAN's consultations with nuclear-weapon countries. On 7 June 2022, Director-General of ASEAN-Viet Nam and Acting ASEAN SOM Leader of Viet Nam Vu Ho attended the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (ExCom SEANWFZ) Treaty Commission, where he reaffirmed the importance of the SEANWFZ Treaty, considering it a key document, demonstrating ASEAN's commitment and common stance in maintaining non-nuclear weapons in the Southeast Asia region.

At the bilateral level, in December 2021 in Ha Noi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dang Hoang Giang received European Union Ambassador (EU) Giorgio Aliberti and Ambassadors of France, Sweden, Poland and Czech to exchange their priorities for the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

f. ICTs Security

The year 2022 is the time the world recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, creating momentum for the development of digital and contactless economy. However, digital economy also brings with it the risks and challenges of cybersecurity for ASEAN countries in general and Viet Nam in particular. Viet Nam has implemented a wide range of policies and measures to strengthen domestic cybersecurity in the context of cross-border trade activities and services being restored, as well as to promote cooperation with international partners in the field of cybersecurity.

Domestically, Viet Nam has taken measures aimed at strengthening the management and promotion of economic recovery raising public awareness, improving data and public security; enhancing internet inspection, scrutinization and statistics, promoting education and caution in mass media to raise users' awareness. Viet Nam also continues to improve national legal framework on data protection and personal identification, in conformity with international standards and practice.

Viet Nam has actively participated in many international forum on the development of international legal framework on cybersecurity, including the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) 2021-2025 and the Ad-hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes. Through coordinated efforts, Viet Nam wishes to promote international cooperation to tackle global cybersecurity challenges, confidence building measures and the provision of technical assistance for developing countries.

In the first half of 2022, Viet Nam has taken active part in many initiatives relating to cybersecurity within the ARF framework, including the the 4th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of ICTs (ISM-ICTs), the 9th ARF Open-Ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs, as well as a number of Workshops.

IV. Role of ARF

Since its establishment in 1994, with a vast geographical footprint and wide range participants, the ARF has continuously provided tremendous value to the promotion of trust and confidence, and the enhancement of political and security dialogue and cooperation among countries in the region.

The ARF remains as a key platform for dialogue and consultation on regional political and security issues of common interest and concern, with ASEAN as the central driving force. The notable progress and achievements made in the implementation of the 2010 Ha Noi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement has contributed significantly to sustain the habit of dialogue and cooperation, enhance mutual trust and confidence as well as strengthen capacity to better respond to emerging challenges.

It is promising to note that after relatively 2 years of virtual meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ARF Participants have begun to take initial steps towards the resumption of ARF activities in the “new normal” through hybrid/physical formats.

As new challenges continue to emerge, including those of non-traditional nature, it has been well recognized that much remains to be done for the ARF to maintain its vital and unique role as well as to enhance its relevance and responsiveness. The ARF Hanoi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) (HPOA II), adopted at the 27th ARF in September 2020, was developed in order to provide policy guidance for the ARF to introduce and implement concrete measures and activities until 2025. After the first two years of implementation, 19/107 action lines have been considered as implemented, which equates the overall implementation rate to 17.7%, as of May 2022. This number is encouraging given the various disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, we should continue our efforts to improve the ARF's effectiveness and efficiency, including through the implementation of the ARF Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocol, which was proposed by Viet Nam and developed by ARF Participants in hopes that it would act as the basis for Participants to identify possible enhancements or refinements for the Forum. It is also important to strengthen the ARF Unit as well as improve the effectiveness of the ARF Fund. All of these points would contribute overall to a more holistic and comprehensive process of streamlining and strengthening the ARF in the years to come.

ASEAN A.C.T.:Addressing Challenges Together

