



42nd AMM / PMC / 16th ARF
THAILAND 2009

(Final)

Chairman's Statement
16th ASEAN Regional Forum
23 July 2009,
Phuket, Thailand

1. The Sixteenth Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was convened in Phuket, Thailand, on 23 July 2009. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Kasit Piromya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand.
2. The Meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers and Representatives of all ARF Participants. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance. The List of Delegates appears as **ANNEX 1**.
3. An ARF Defense Dialogue among defense and military officials attending the 16th ARF was also held in Phuket on 22 July 2009.
4. The Ministers welcomed the 15th anniversary of the ARF and commended the ARF on its achievements in building trust and confidence in the Asia-Pacific region since its inception in Bangkok, Thailand in 1994.
5. The Ministers also welcomed ASEAN's determination to establish an ASEAN Community by 2015, guided by the ASEAN Charter which entered into force in December 2008 and the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community 2009-2015 which among others provides the blueprint for the ASEAN Political-Security Community.
6. The Ministers recognized that the Asia-Pacific region continues to face multi-dimensional threats and challenges and that the ARF therefore needs to continue to revitalize itself in order to maintain its relevance and primacy in promoting regional peace and stability and in helping to shape the evolving regional security architecture. They believed that the ARF can continue to promote cooperation in areas of shared and mutual interests and generate concrete benefits for the peoples of the region. To this end, the ARF Ministers considered and adopted an ARF Vision Statement as appears in **ANNEX 2**, charting a vision for the ARF by 2020 and its place in the region. They tasked Senior Officials to develop a plan of action to realize the goals and objectives set out in the ARF Vision Statement, for consideration at the 17th ARF in 2010, and to keep it under regular review.

Regional and International Security Issues

(Korean Peninsula)

7. The Ministers of several countries condemned the recent nuclear test and missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). They

strongly urged all member countries of the United Nations to commit themselves to fully implement the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009) according to which these recent activities violated the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. They regarded these activities as adversely affecting peace and stability in the region and beyond as well as the non-proliferation regime. They expressed their strong conviction that peace and stability of each relevant State can and should be safeguarded through political and diplomatic means. In this connection, they supported the dialogue and cooperation among all the concerned parties, including the early resumption of the Six-Party Talks to address the issue of the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and humanitarian concerns of the international community. They also emphasized the importance of the full implementation of the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005. They expected that all concerned parties would exercise self-restraint and refrain from any moves that could aggravate the situation in Northeast Asia.

8. The DPRK did not recognize and totally rejected the UNSC Resolution 1874 which has been adopted at the instigation of the United States. The DPRK briefed the Meeting of the fact that the ongoing aggravated situation on the Korean Peninsula is the product of the hostile policy of the United States against her, and stated that the Six-Party Talks have already come to an end, with the strong emphasis on the unique and specific security environment on the Korean Peninsula which lies in its continued division and presence of US military troops for over half a century to date in South Korea, since this factor is vital to consider and address the question of the Korean Peninsula.

(Afghanistan)

9. The Ministers supported the efforts of Afghanistan in trying to achieve stability, national reconciliation and reconstruction, with the assistance of the international community. They welcomed the efforts of Afghanistan in cooperation with the United Nations in preparing for presidential and provincial elections in August and looked forward to them being free and fair. They underlined the importance of continued international engagement and assistance to help promote stability, good governance and reconstruction in Afghanistan, and in this regard, recognized the importance of regional efforts and cooperation.

(Myanmar)

10. The Foreign Ministers took note of the briefing by the Myanmar Foreign Minister on developments inside Myanmar and Myanmar's cooperation with the United Nations, including the visit to Myanmar by Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the

Secretary-General of the United Nations, on 3-4 July 2009. They reaffirmed their view that the UN has a crucial role to play in the process of national reconciliation as well as the economic and social development in Myanmar. They welcomed close cooperation between the Government of Myanmar and the UN in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis. They expressed their willingness to continue to engage constructively with and contribute to the economic and social development of Myanmar and

encouraged the Myanmar Government to make concrete and credible progress on the path of democratization. In this connection, they encouraged the Myanmar Government to hold free, fair and inclusive elections in 2010, thereby laying down a good foundation for future social and economic development. They also called on the Myanmar Government to release all those under detention, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, with a view to enabling them to participate in the 2010 General Elections, thereby paving the way for meaningful dialogue and genuine reconciliation.

(Middle East)

11. The Ministers discussed the situation in the Middle East and emphasized the need to ensure long-term peace, security and stability in the region. They called for a final, just and comprehensive settlement with the realization of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace within secured and recognized borders, based on the Roadmap, the relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions as well as the Arab Peace Initiatives. The Ministers were encouraged by the ongoing U.S. discussions with all parties in the region to create the conditions for the prompt resumption and early conclusion of negotiations on issues relating to the Middle East Peace Process. They expressed hope that the United States, the Quartet, and the international community would continue to exert their influence to further encourage the parties concerned to restart negotiations on the Peace Process. The Ministers reiterated the call for the unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people in Gaza in order to help alleviate their plight and expressed concern that the border crossings into Gaza has not been opened to allow humanitarian aid and basic supplies to be provided to the people of Gaza, and a complete halt to all violence.

(South China Sea)

12. The Ministers reaffirmed the continuing importance of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea of 2002 (DOC) as a milestone document between the Member States of ASEAN and China, embodying their collective commitment to ensure the peaceful resolution of disputes in the area. They believed that the Declaration has been effective in building mutual trust and confidence among the claimants in the area and in maintaining peace and stability in the region. They reiterated the hope that the Member States of ASEAN and China would expeditiously conclude the Guidelines on the Implementation of the DOC. They looked forward to the eventual conclusion of a Regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. They encouraged the continued exercise of self-restraint by all the parties concerned and the promotion of confidence-building

measures in this area and welcomed their commitment to resolving disputes in the South China Sea by peaceful means in conformity with the spirit of the DOC and recognised principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

(Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia)

13. The Ministers endorsed the purposes and principle of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as a code of conduct governing relations between States. They welcomed the recent accession to the TAC by the United States noting that almost all ARF Participants are High Contracting Parties to the TAC. The Ministers also welcomed the intent of the EU/EC to join the TAC and expressed hope for its early accession. They also recognized the TAC's contribution to promoting peace and stability in the region.

(Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime)

14. The Ministers strongly condemned the bombings in Jakarta on 17 July 2009, which caused loss of innocent lives and injuries, and extended their solidarity to Indonesia and affirmed their confidence in the Indonesian Government in bringing the perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice. The Ministers also strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Mumbai in November 2008 and extended their solidarity with India and their desire that the perpetrators of these acts and those who aided, abetted or supported them be brought to justice.

15. The Ministers also reiterated the commitment to strengthen all efforts to combat terrorism/extremism in the Asia-Pacific region including under the aegis of the U.N., underscored the indivisibility of security and called for continuous implementation of the UN counter terrorism strategy. They also encouraged the development of networking and intra-regional capabilities in such fora as, *inter alia*, ASEAN, ARF, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). They resolved to cooperate in promoting capacity-building and strengthen institutional capacity of the ARF Participants in the forefront of the global campaign against terrorism to counter the menace of terrorism and extremism and to equip them with the wherewithal to respond to this threat more effectively and efficiently. They encouraged greater bilateral and multilateral efforts to enhance intelligence exchange and information sharing, develop wider networks of focal points, link database on terrorists and provide mutual legal assistance as allowed by laws of the respective countries. They agreed on the need to empower moderate sectors of society and to promote a culture of peace, tolerance, mutual understanding, respect and dialogue amongst peoples, cultures, religions and civilizations, in particular amongst the youth and in class rooms.

16. The Ministers adopted the ARF Work Plan on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CT/TC) which appears as **ANNEX 3** and which would be updated as appropriate. They tasked the Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime to coordinate the effective implementation of this Work Plan as well as suggest additional recommendations as appropriate to strengthen the capacity of the Asia-Pacific region in countering terrorism and transnational crime.

(Natural Disaster Management)

17. The Ministers recognized that natural disasters pose an increasing threat to peoples of the Asia-Pacific region and stressed the urgency of developing effective prevention, relief, mitigation and rehabilitation measures and arrangements in the region to complement and reinforce existing mechanisms including the United Nations. The Ministers welcomed the recent efforts of ASEAN to further develop regional standby arrangement, rapid response teams, including initiatives on cooperation over use of military assets in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief on voluntary basis, and the designation of Secretary-General of ASEAN as coordinator for humanitarian assistance in cases of major disasters and pandemics. The Ministers resolved to develop synergies and links as appropriate between the efforts in this area undertaken by ASEAN, the ARF and other relevant bodies and fora in the region.

18. The Ministers welcomed the fact that the first ever live field exercise in the ARF took place in the area of disaster relief cooperation with the conduct of the ARF Voluntary Demonstration of Response on Disaster Relief in the Philippines on 4-8 May 2009. They considered that the exercise was a major step for the ARF in developing concrete and tangible contributions to a transnational security issue like disaster relief and recommended a follow-on exercise. They further encouraged the ongoing discussions involving a potential host nation and co-sponsors for a future ARF disaster relief exercise. The Ministers also welcomed Indonesia co-hosting the next ARF field exercise on disaster relief with the support of Japan.

19. The Minister adopted the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief which appears as **ANNEX 4** and looked forward to its continued development and implementation, particularly the realization of the ARF Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief by the 17th ARF. Welcoming ARF efforts to enhance civilian-military cooperation in disaster relief, the Ministers noted efforts to develop an ARF Voluntary Model Arrangements for Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defense Assets (MCDA) in Disaster Relief. The Concept Paper appears as **ANNEX 5**. They tasked the Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) to refine the concept further.

(Pandemics)

20. The Ministers expressed concern with the current outbreak of Influenza A (H1N1) which has spread rapidly throughout the world and has claimed many lives in the Asia-Pacific region. They stressed the urgency of enhanced cooperation with one another in various regional and multilateral fora, particularly in the areas of timely data sharing and exchange, capacity building, development of effective national pandemic preparedness plans, strengthening surveillance and responses, and effective communication especially within the public realm while underscoring the need to avoid panic and public misinformation. In this connection, they explored the possibility of enhancing cooperation in production and procurement of affordable anti-viral vaccines in order to ensure access to medication by all who needs it. They also reaffirmed collective efforts to enhance regional capabilities in surveillance,

preparedness and response to pandemic diseases. They welcomed the successful outcome of the ASEAN Plus Three Health Ministers Special Meeting on Influenza A (H1N1) held in Bangkok on 8 May 2009, which, among others, called for a network of national systems to share anti-viral vaccines in cases of emergency.

(Disarmament and Non-Proliferation)

21. The Ministers took note of encouraging developments on nuclear disarmament in various fora and in particular welcomed the Joint Understanding on further reductions and limitations of strategic offensive arms between the President of the Russian Federation and the President of the United States of America. Ministers of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) looked forward to the convening of the Review Conference of State Parties to the NPT in 2010 for the realization of the objectives and principles enshrined in the NPT in a balanced manner and agreed to support and work closely with the Philippines' Presidency of the Review Conference. The Ministers underscored the importance of taking concerted measures under international law to prevent non-state actors from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction materials and technology. They recognised the right of States to pursue nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with their non-proliferation obligations. The Ministers tasked the Inter-sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (NPD) to develop a work plan on NPD.

Review of Activities of the Current Inter-Sessional Year (August 2008-July 2009)

22. The Ministers welcomed the contribution of and interaction between Track I and Track II activities that had taken place during the current inter-sessional year (August 2008 - July 2009). They commended the work of the ARF Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in Phuket on 20 May 2009 and ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs & PD), co-chaired by Singapore and the Republic of Korea, which met in Singapore on 8 - 10 October 2008 and in Seoul, Republic of Korea

on 21-22 April 2009. The Ministers noted the summary report of the co-chairs and endorsed their recommendations. The Report of the SOM is at **ANNEX 6** and the Co-Chairs' Reports of the ISG appear as **ANNEX 7** and **8**.

23. The Ministers welcomed the contributions made by the defence officials in the ARF process. In this regard, the Ministers were pleased with the outcome of the Sixth ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference (ASPC) hosted by Thailand on 19 May 2009. They recognized that the high-level interaction among the ARF defence policy officials had contributed further to build confidence and fostered mutual understanding, thus contributing to the maintenance of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. The Ministers also welcomed the concrete and practical cooperation amongst the ARF participants in responding to non-traditional security threats which signified the readiness of how ARF participants could all work together for the common purpose of humanitarian assistance and noted the efforts by the ASEAN Defence Ministers to engage with Civil Society Organizations in addressing non-

traditional security threats. The Chairman's Summary Report of the ASPC is in **ANNEX 9**.

24. Reiterating the importance of enhancing cooperation in disaster relief, mitigation, and management, the Ministers welcomed the 8th ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) held in Aceh, Indonesia, Co-Chaired by Indonesia and the European Union as contained in the Co-Chairs' Summary Report which appears as **ANNEX 10**.

25. Reemphasizing the importance of promoting close cooperation to combat the common threat of terrorism and transnational crime, the Ministers welcomed the 7th Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC) co-chaired by Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea and Bangladesh, as contained in the Co-Chairs' Summary Report which appears as **ANNEX 11**.

26. Recognizing the threat to regional and international peace and stability posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the Ministers welcomed the inaugural Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD), co-chaired by China, Singapore and the United States, as contained in the Co-Chairs' Summary Report which appears as **ANNEX 12**.

27. Underscoring the importance of promoting cooperation on maritime security, the Ministers welcomed the inaugural Inter-sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS), co-chaired by Indonesia, Japan, and New Zealand, as contained in the Co-Chairs' Summary Report which appears as **ANNEX 13**. They also expressed concern over the threat of piracy and called for cooperative measures to deal with this threat.

28. The Ministers welcomed progress regarding the Virtual Meeting of Experts on Cyber Security and Cyber Terrorism, noting that participation in the Meeting will be on a voluntary basis. The Ministers expressed appreciation for the leading roles by the Republic of Korea and the Philippines which should complement efforts under the ARF CTTC Workplan.

29. The Ministers noted the following workshops and seminars, which were completed in the inter-sessional year 2008-2009:

- ARF Workshop on Stabilization and Reconstruction Issues, Bangkok, Thailand, 10 – 12 September 2008
- ARF Defense Dialogue, Singapore, 8 October 2008
- ARF Inter-sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy, Singapore, 8 - 10 October 2008
- 12th ARF Heads of Defense Universities/Colleges/Institutions, Islamabad, Pakistan, 21 – 23 October 2008
- ARF Conference on Terrorist Use of the Internet, Bali, Indonesia, 6 - 8 November 2008

- 3rd ARF Experts and Eminent Persons Meeting, Beijing, China, 13 – 15 November 2008
- Advanced Maritime Security Training Programme for ARF Member States, Chennai, India, 17 – 22 November 2008
- 8th ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief, Bandar Aceh, Indonesia, 5 – 6 December 2008
- 1st ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Maritime Security, Surabaya, Indonesia, 5 – 6 March 2009
- ARF Seminar on International Security Implications of Climate-Related Events and Trends, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 19 March 2009
- ARF Defense Officials' Dialogue, Seoul, Republic of Korea, 20 April 2009
- ARF Inter-sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy, Seoul, Republic of Korea, 21 – 22 April 2009
- ARF Seminar on the Laws and Regulations in the Participation in International Disaster Relief by Armed Forces, Beijing, China, 22 – 25 April 2009
- 7th ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Hanoi, Viet Nam, 4 – 7 May 2009
- ARF Voluntary Demonstration of Response (ARF VDR) on Disaster Relief, Central Luzon, 4 – 8 May 2009
- Training Course on Peacekeeping at the CUNPK, New Delhi, India, 18-22 May 2009
- ARF Workshop on Biological Threat Reduction, Manila, the Philippines, 10-11 June 2009
- 3rd ARF Peacekeeping Experts' Meeting, Siem Reap, Cambodia, 24-26 June 2009
- 1st ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Beijing, China, 1-3 July 2009

Programme of Work for the Next Inter-sessional Year

30. The Ministers agreed that the ISG on CBMs & PD will continue to promote confidence building while progressing towards preventive diplomacy, and welcomed the offer by Viet Nam and India to co-chair the ISG on CBMs & PD in the next inter-sessional year. The Ministers noted that the first meeting of the ISG on CBMs and PD for the inter-sessional year 2009 - 2010 will be held in India tentatively in the second half of 2009 and the second meeting will be held in Viet Nam in the first half of 2010.

31. The Ministers agreed that the ISM on DR, CTTC, NPD and MS should continue its work. In this connection, the Ministers welcomed the offers of the United

States and Thailand to co-host the 9th ISM on DR in Hawaii in 16-18 September 2009, of Brunei Darussalam and Russia to co-chair the 8th ISM on CTTC, of Singapore to host the 2nd ISM on NPD in the first half of 2010 and of New Zealand to host the 2nd ISM on MS in the first half of 2010.

32. The Ministers reaffirmed the procedure that all proposed ARF activities should first be discussed at the ISG/ISM level and agreed to by the ARF SOM unless participants undertake procedures in line with the Working Methods Paper. In this regard, the Ministers approved the List of ARF Track I Activities for the next inter-sessional year (July 2009 - July 2010) which appears as **ANNEX 14**.

Future Direction of the ARF

33. The Ministers welcomed Viet Nam as the Chair of the 17th ARF whose term begins on 1 January 2010 and the next ASEAN Vice-Chair as the Vice Chair of the ARF.

34. The Ministers took note of the Matrix of Relevant Recommendations for Follow-Up from the ARF Study on Preventive Diplomacy which appears as **ANNEX 15**. Recognizing that preventive diplomacy activities should take into account the principles of the UN and ASEAN Charter as well as those set out in the ARF Concept Paper of 1995, they mandated officials to begin the development of an ARF PD Work Plan, drawing on the above-mentioned Matrix

and other relevant ARF documents, and requested the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) to provide their views on the elements of such a Work Plan.

35. Guided by the need to make the ARF capable of responding effectively and in a timely manner to challenges, the Ministers adopted the Paper “Improving ARF Working Methods” which provide, among others, streamlined decision-making and consultations processes. The Paper appears in **ANNEX 16**.

36. Recognizing the important contribution that transparency can make to building trust and confidence and promoting better mutual understanding in the diverse Asia-Pacific region, the Ministers appreciated the voluntary contribution by ARF Participants to the 2009 ARF Annual Security Outlook (ASO) whose format has been streamlined and encouraged senior officials to further develop the format with a view to making it concise, standardised and useful.

37. The Ministers expressed appreciation for the contribution by the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) in generating useful ideas and initiatives for the ARF and, in this regard, noted the report of the Third ARF EEP Meeting held in Beijing during 13 – 15 November 2008 which appears as **ANNEX 17**. The Meeting encouraged the ARF EEPs to focus their work on developing ideas on practical preventive diplomacy measures and avoid duplication of activities of ARF Track II fora.

38. The Ministers emphasised the need to continue strengthening ties with other regional and international security organisations as well as linkages between Track I

and Track II. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the participation of Track II and regional and international organisations in ARF meetings as a means to generate new ideas, develop networks and information sharing. Welcoming the growing links between the ARF and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Ministers welcomed the development of links with other organisations in the region such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to explore possible cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as cooperation against terrorism.

39. The Ministers commended the ARF Unit in assisting the ARF Chair and acting as its Secretariat, including through regularly updating the Matrix of ARF Decisions and their Status as well as made available ARF documents on the ARF Net. Recognizing the limitations in resources of the ASEAN Secretariat, the Ministers acknowledged the assistance ARF Participants extended to the ARF Unit and encouraged others to do the same so that it could assist the ARF Chair in implementing ARF decisions and the ARF Vision Statement. To ensure effective follow-up of ARF decisions, they tasked the ARF Unit to compile a list of key policy recommendations of the ARF and to work with the relevant fora in the ARF to encourage their implementation and to report to the 17th ARF of the progress in such implementation.
