ANNEX D

THE USE OF ASEAN MILITARY ASSETS AND CAPACITIES IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF
- CONCEPT PAPER -

Background

1. The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) was signed on 26 July 2005 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Agreement seeks to provide an effective mechanism to minimise losses to personnel, social, economic, and environmental assets and resources of the ASEAN Member States, as well as to respond jointly to disaster emergencies through concerted national effort and intensified regional and international cooperation.

2. To ensure adequate preparedness for an effective response, the Agreement mandates the establishment of the ASEAN Standby Arrangements for Disaster Relief and Emergency Response as stated in Article 9. This preparedness mechanism aims to identify and mobilise available assets and capacities for disaster management, which Parties shall earmark on a voluntary basis, based on capabilities of the sending State, to assist each other in times of a disaster emergency, subject to the consent of the receiving State.

3. As a follow-up to the agreement, the Standard Operating Procedures for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP) is currently being finalised and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) is in the process of being established.

4. In addition, Component 1 of the ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management (ARPDM) 2004-2010 relates to the Establishment of the ASEAN Regional Disaster Management Framework. The framework has specific provisions on “Enhancing the Quick Response Capacities of Member Countries,” which promotes cooperation and collaboration among Member States in all areas of disaster management including joint projects, collaborative research and networking.
5. The increasing number of disasters as well as the unprecedented scale of the international response indicates that there is indeed a sense of urgency to establish an ASEAN standby arrangement for emergency response and risk reduction.

6. Based on previous experiences from the Aceh Tsunami, Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and the recent earthquake in China, the participation of the military and its ability to muster assets and capacities to respond in a timely manner has proven to be a useful tool in assisting relief efforts in the affected areas.

7. As ASEAN militaries could play an important role in any humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations, this paper discusses the utilisation of military assets and capacities in support of the ASEAN Standby Arrangements as provided for under the AADMER.

Use of Terms

8. The use of all terms in this concept paper refers to the terms used in the AADMER (see AADMER Article 1. Use of Terms & Oslo Guidelines).

Purposes

9. To accelerate the effective operations of the ASEAN military in HADR operations regionally and internationally and to minimise loss to live and property due to natural and man-made disasters, while respecting the sovereignty of the affected State.

Principles

10. The use of military assets and capacities for disaster management, which ASEAN Member States, on a voluntary basis, earmarked to help each other in times of disaster emergency shall be guided by the following principles:

   a) Respecting national sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of the affected State, in accordance with the United Nations and ASEAN Charter; In this context, each affected State shall have the primary responsibility to respond to a disaster occurring within its territory. External assistance or offers of assistance may only be provided upon the request or with the consent of the affected State;
b) The assisting countries must respect the National Laws and Regulations of the affected State;
c) The affected State shall exercise the overall direction, control, coordination and supervision of assistance within its territory;
d) Humanity; human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found, with particular attention to the most vulnerable in the population, such as children, women and the elderly. The dignity and rights of all victims must be respected and protected;
e) Neutrality; humanitarian assistance must be provided without engaging in hostilities or taking sides in controversies of politics, religion, or ideology;
f) Impartiality; humanitarian assistance must be provided without discriminating the ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political opinions, race or religion of the affected population. Relief of the suffering must be guided solely by needs and priority must be given to the most urgent cases of distress;
g) Military assets and capabilities should be activated taking into account existing civilian assets, with a view to enhancing civilian-military coordination in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Description

11. The designation of military assets and capacities for immediate humanitarian assistance is based upon the current necessities to mitigate and minimise the result of a disaster;

12. Each ASEAN Member State shall, on a voluntary basis, earmark military assets and capacities, which may be available for the ASEAN Standby Arrangements for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

13. The assets and capacities provided to the ASEAN Standby Arrangements are listed for planning purposes only. The final decision whether to actually deploy the resources remains a national decision of the Assisting State. The duration of deployment of assets and capacities is to be mutually determined by the Assisting and the Receiving State.

14. Type of Military assets and capacities:

   a) Type of Unit; it could be a medical, engineer, or infantry and so on from the Army, Navy and Air force;
   b) Level of Unit; it could be a unit, company, or battalion and so on;
c) Capabilities and capacities; including making available own transportation in delivering humanitarian assistance and disaster relief or deploying transportation assets and capacities in order to assist other sending nations to transport their military assets and troops;

d) The expertise of individual military officers on disaster management and technologies; such as manager, planner, logistic officers, and so on;

e) Emergency stockpiles of disaster relief items.

f) Military assistance during HADR operations may include: heavy lift; deployable engineering; infrastructure and logistic support; evacuation; rescue; medical services; accommodation; and emergency supplies;

g) Military assets for emergency response operations may include: equipment and facilities for heavy lifting; emergency transportation; emergency communication; emergency power generators; field hospitals; and storage; evacuation and temporary shelter.

15. Such earmarked assets and capacities should be communicated to each of the Parties involved as well as the AHA Centre and request updates as necessary by the Party concerned;

16. The AHA Centre shall consolidate, update and disseminate the data on the assets and capacities that have been earmarked, and communicate with the Parties for their utilisation.

Responsibility

17. The responsibilities are as follows:

   a) As a tool complementing existing relief mechanism;
   b) Can be mobilised and deployed bilaterally or under ASEAN agreements;
   c) All relief action remains the overall responsibility of the affected State.

Costing and Funding

18. The assistance of the ASEAN Military Assets and Capacities are to be provided at no cost to the affected State, unless otherwise agreed upon between the concerned States or regulated by international agreements;
Identification and Security

19. The identification and security measures are as follows:

   a) Military personnel of the sending State shall be permitted to wear the national military uniform of their state and shall be identified by appropriate markings.
   
   b) In principle, the military personnel deployed in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations shall not carry weapons while performing official duties, unless otherwise agreed;
   
   c) Adequate security for the authorised foreign military support would be the responsibility of the affected State.

Coordination and Communications

20. As the military assets and capacities are earmarked for the purpose of the ASEAN Standby Arrangements, the utilisation of such assets and capacities shall be coordinated and communicated through the procedures put in place by the AADMER, such as the AHA Centre.

21. To facilitate possible joint operations in the disaster area, each ASEAN Member State shall appoint a National Military to Military Contact Point that could facilitate information exchange.

Preparedness

22. Response Plans shall be made once the disaster occurs and upon the request of the affected State and the assets will be deployed in a timely manner.

23. The ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting shall establish the SOP of the use of military assets and capacities in HADR for implementation.

24. Each ASEAN Member State shall share the information regarding the assets and capacities of their own military that can be used in HADR.

Deployment and Response Time

25. To ensure effective and prompt response in times of emergency, each ASEAN Member State shall adhere to a stipulated standard response time for deployment after receiving the request for assistance from the affected State or upon an offer for ASEAN humanitarian assistance being accepted.
26. The time frame of deployment is for the first 30 days after the event of disaster or unless decided by the affected State.

27. The following common response categories are proposed:

- Deployment : within 0 – 24 hours
- Search and Rescue : within 0 - 48 hours
- Emergency Relief : within 0 - 5 days
- Relief Assistance : within 0 - 4 weeks

**Education and Training**

28. Enhancing the effectiveness of military assets and capacities should be maintained by conducting training; exercises (Map Exercise, Command Post Exercise & Field Exercise); seminars and workshops;

**Review of Concept Paper**

29. This Concept Paper serves as an initial framework for the utilisation of military assets and capacities for disaster relief and emergency response operations. This Concept Paper could be further reviewed.