

ANNEX F

ASEAN DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs) COOPERATION ON NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY

– CONCEPT PAPER –

Background

1. The ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) was established following the decision of the 10th ASEAN Summit in Vientiane in 2004 to adopt the ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action (ASC PoA) which provides that ASEAN will work towards the convening of an annual ADMM. To further complement other efforts in the region in promoting regional peace and security cooperation, the Concept Paper for the Establishment of an ADMM, adopted on 9 May 2006, highlights various ADMM's contributions including promoting mutual trust and confidence through greater understanding of defence and security challenges as well as enhancing transparency and openness.
2. Within ASEAN, complex and diverse regional non-traditional security challenges are still present and on the rise. Their nature differs from one challenge to another. They share commonalities in their transnational nature and are increasingly becoming international issues. Most countries have deep concerns over the increasing seriousness of non-traditional security challenges.
3. ASEAN defence establishments have actively become involved with non-traditional security issues and continuously given valuable support to the respective governments in responding to these challenges. According to the ADMM's Three-Year Work Programme, adopted by ASEAN Defence Ministers in November 2007, non-traditional security issues were outlined under various cooperative headings including shaping and sharing of norms, conflict prevention, post-conflict peace building for further cooperation among defence establishments. Therefore, it is important for ASEAN defence establishments to seek and identify appropriate approaches and mechanisms to support other bodies, sectors, institutions and organisations to fulfill and uphold the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter.

4. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are referred to in the ASEAN Charter and the United Nations Millennium Declaration. CSOs have played a major role in contributing assistance and worked closely with the people at all levels on non-traditional security issues. Generally, they often have strong links with community groups in developing countries, and they often work in areas where government-to-government aid is not possible. Nonetheless, they need healthy relationships with the public to meet their goals. They have been part of and exercising some influence over the policy-making process by actively expressing the interests of social groups and raising awareness of people on key issues. In recent decades, CSOs have been successful in shaping regional and global policies through advocacy campaigns and mobilisation of people and resources. Appropriate CSOs participation and involvement, in a value added manner, have also contributed to the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector's work and the betterment of people and society. In the future, this trend of CSOs involvement will continue to rise.

5. Consistent with that reality, it is advisable for the ASEAN defence establishments to explore practical cooperation with CSOs on non-traditional security issues at regional level to enhance the well-being and livelihood of the peoples of ASEAN, as well as peace, security and stability in the region.

Objectives

6. In strengthening the ASEAN defence establishments' potentials, promoting their opportunities, and building needed cooperative mechanisms with CSOs, the ASEAN defence establishments should endeavour to explore ways to fulfill the following objectives.

a. To exchange views and carry out dialogue and cooperation between ASEAN defence establishments and CSOs to lessen or resolve non-traditional issues.

b. To establish communications, links and networks between ASEAN defence establishments and CSOs.

c. To seek productive and meaningful approaches that enhance and promote cooperation with the CSOs in providing support to the governments and jointly responding to non-traditional security issues.

Guiding Principles

7. Governments of ASEAN Member States retain the full and final discretion with regard to the nature, manner and extent of their respective engagement with CSOs. In pursuit of the aforementioned objectives, the CSOs should be legalised and recognised by local or state governments. Cooperation between ASEAN defence establishments and the CSOs on non-traditional security shall adhere to the guiding principles agreed by the ADMM includes the Concept Paper for the Establishment of an ADMM, the Protocol to the Concept Paper, the ADMM's Three-Year Work Programme, the Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Enhancing Regional Peace and Stability, and the ADMM-Plus Concept Paper.

8. Given that each country has different ways and means in dealing with non-traditional security issues, ASEAN defence establishments and CSOs shall also function and cooperate in accordance with the Principles outlined in Article 2 of the ASEAN Charter.

9. Cooperation between ASEAN defence establishments and the CSOs should be in line with the current regional security challenges hence efforts should be focused on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief for a start.

Modalities

10. To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, dual strategies can be adopted. Defence establishments in each ASEAN Member State may individually pursue the cooperation as they find appropriate with the CSOs. Within the ASEAN framework, ASEAN defence establishments may also collectively cooperate with the CSOs on the issues that both sides agree. Both ASEAN defence establishments and the CSOs should advance forward together since the key success factor is the working relationship between military personnel and civilians.

11. ASEAN defence establishments' engagement with CSOs could take a variety of forms, including but not restricted to the following:

a. Communication with the CSOs is to be done through defence establishments of respective ASEAN Member States.

b. Identify and select the capable CSOs operating in ASEAN Member States as well as regional CSOs in order to establish contact and cooperation that will further facilitate necessary response to non-traditional security challenges.

c. Open to CSOs' views to be considered as part of governments' policy-making process.

d. Invite key-contributing CSOs to ASEAN defence workshops.

e. Find appropriate channels in order to exchange views and collect useful public opinions.

f. Build up ASEAN defence establishments capacity and coordinating mechanisms to facilitate and utilise international assistance, which the affected country has consented to receive.

Adoption

12. This Concept Paper, an evolving document, would be adopted by the ASEAN Defence Ministers and can be subject to further review.

Conclusion

13. The CSOs are one of the stakeholders in ASEAN defence establishments' dealings with regional non-traditional security challenges in the future. This Concept Paper shall help facilitate the ASEAN defence establishments' future engagement and cooperation with the CSOs in support of the governments' addressing and responding to non-traditional security challenges. Future cooperation between ASEAN defence establishments and CSOs is on the rise and inevitable. Therefore, this open and outward-looking ASEAN defence establishments attitude should contribute and benefit the needs of the peoples of ASEAN.
