

Information Note¹

Event: **First Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)**

Organizers: The Governments of China, Singapore and the United States

Date & Venue: 1-3 July 2009; Beijing, China

Participants: *States:* Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK), Republic of Korea (ROK), Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, United States, and Vietnam

Other: European Union

International Organizations: ASEAN Secretariat, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), 1540 Committee Chairman, and a 1540 Committee expert

Civil society: the Committee on Security and Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP)

1. **Objectives**

- provide information on the Comprehensive Review on the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and invite ARF members and the ARF to contribute;
- explain and promote the clearinghouse and matching role of the 1540 Committee, and encourage States to present assistance requests using the assistance template, the matrix, and an action plan;
- explore how the ARF can contribute to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

2. **Background**

At the Fifteenth Ministerial Meeting of the ARF in July 2008, the ARF decided to establish Inter-Sessional Meetings on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. China, Singapore and the United States volunteered to organize the first meeting. This meeting builds on earlier activities related to non-proliferation and disarmament. In February 2007, the ARF, Canada, Singapore and the United States hosted a workshop on implementing resolution 1540 (2004) in San Francisco, United States. The primary purpose was to help raise awareness about resolution 1540 (2004) among ARF members. In July 2006, China, Norway, the European Union and UNODA organized an outreach event, entitled “Seminar on Implementing Resolution 1540 in the Asia and Pacific Region,” in Beijing, China. Canada and Singapore also organized an experts meeting on export controls in 2005.

3. **Highlights**

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

The meeting provided participants an opportunity to discuss various topics related to non-proliferation and disarmament, including: the establishment of nuclear weapons-free zones, export controls, adherence to international treaties and arms control agreements. Almost all participants saw current world conditions conducive to advancing nonproliferation and disarmament in the region.

The 1540 Committee Chairman delivered his remarks on the implementation status of resolution 1540 (2004) in the region stressing the important role that regional organizations can play in this process, and the significance and opportunities generated by the Comprehensive Review.

Several States highlighted the value of assistance in implementing resolution 1540 (2004), with the European Union and the United States outlining their assistance programmes, such as the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program and the International Nonproliferation Export Control Program. Japan outlined its programmes, including the Asian Export Control Seminar, the training program for export control licensing officers in Asia, and its outreach to industry in India, Indonesia and elsewhere in the region. The 1540 Committee expert presented the ways in which the Committee can foster assistance and the advantages for Member States of using its assistance template.

Several States argued that strong export controls facilitated trade and the peaceful use of related materials, especially when coordinated with modernizing and automating their customs and other trade controls. A number of participants emphasized the importance of having lists of controlled dual-use items, and the value of those lists prepared by the export control arrangements.

The meeting also stressed the importance of regional cooperation. General agreement emerged that ARF Members, the ASEAN Secretariat, and CSACP should work together to promote implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and other nonproliferation regimes in the region. The ASEAN Secretariat made a very positive statement on the extent to which it is prepared to work with ARF members, CSCAP, and the 1540 Committee to advance implementation of the resolution in the region

CSCAP made a presentation on a draft CSCAP Handbook on Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Asia-Pacific (available online at <http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/WMDSGReports/DraftHandbookJune2009.pdf>), CSCAP Memorandum No. 14 (Guidelines for Managing Trade of Strategic Goods), and on the key findings and recommendations from a meeting of the CSCAP Study Group on Countering the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Asia Pacific (29-30 June 2009, Beijing, China).

The Co-chairs' summary report of the first ASEAN Regional Forum inter-sessional meeting on non-proliferation and disarmament is available at: <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Gmb9RcIUzMU%3D&tabid=66&mid=1072>

4. Additional comments

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at 1540experts@un.org.