

**Co-Chairs' Summary Report of
the Third ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Nonproliferation and
Disarmament
Las Vegas, USA, 23-25 February 2011**

Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 17th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Ha Noi on 23 July 2010, the Third ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Nonproliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) was held in Las Vegas from 23-25 February 2011. The Meeting was co-chaired by Dr. Eliot Kang, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation of the United States Department of State, Ms. Lim Kheng Hua, Director, International Organisations Directorate, Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Wang Xiaoning, Counselor, Department of Arms Control and Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

2. Participants from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, United States, and Viet Nam were present. Representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit (BWC-ISU) also attended the meeting, as did a representative from the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC), and from the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP). The List of Participants appears as **ANNEX 1**.

Opening Session

3. The keynote address was delivered by Rose Gottemoeller, Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance. Her

DPRK would be necessary, but recognized that resolution of the nuclear issue would understandably take precedence in international engagement with the DPRK.

23. Responding to concerns raised by China, Japan replied that it was moving quickly to meet its obligations under the Convention, but noted the challenges involved in safely destroying the weapons. Japan also noted that a mobile destruction facility had been deployed to conduct such destructions, and that a second mobile destruction facility was planned for deployment. The United States also noted frustrations expressed with the pace of chemical disarmament, but noted that the inability to meet established deadlines was not a function of any lack of political will, but rather it reflected the enormous challenges involved in dismantling chemical weapons safely and irreversibly. The United States noted that it currently spends 1 billion USD annually on dismantlement at a facility that operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Thailand emphasized the importance of promoting trust and confidence as well as capacity-building and therefore underscored the importance of convening a Challenge Inspection Field Exercise with the OPCW in Thailand in 2011.

Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

24. The Biological Toxin Weapons Convention's Implementation Support Unit provided a briefing on the status of the Convention, and discussed preparations for the 7th Review Conference of the Convention to be held in December 2011. The ISU sought to ensure that all participants in the BWC Review Conference were made aware of the issues to be discussed before the Conference began, and noted that meetings such as this ISM were valuable in that regard. The briefing noted that the BWC has no standing secretariat such as the OPCW or IAEA, and that the ISU is composed of only three officers. Proposals to expand the size and mandate of this Unit will be considered at the Review Conference, and many ARF participants expressed support for the ISU and noted the need for it to be given the resources it needs to complete its important work. Participants also discussed the need for better intersessional work in between the BWC Review Conferences, and called for ways to identify concrete means to build

capacities and to promote international co-operation in support of the objectives of the Convention. The ISU noted that exchanges of information and confidence building measures were key to the implementation of the Treaty, and noted that the 2011 Review Conference will explore ways to improve the mechanism for such exchanges.

25. Many participants expressed their support for the BWC. Some participants also called for creation of a verification protocol to help build confidence in states' compliance with the Convention. The Meeting expressed strong support for the 2011 Review Conference, and encouraged all participants to follow developments on the Review Conference closely to ensure a successful Review Conference. In this regard, China noted a workshop held in Beijing in 2010 to discuss issues in relation to and in preparation for the 2011 Review Conference. Some participants also noted the work on biosecurity currently being undertaken in the ARF ISM on Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime, and expressed the wish that this work could also help support a successful Review Conference.

Topic 3: Promoting Cooperation in Nonproliferation and Disarmament

Transparency in Nonproliferation and Disarmament

26. Singapore provided a briefing on the importance of transparency in both nonproliferation and disarmament. Singapore stated, and many participants agreed, that the Additional Protocol was an important step for all states to undertake to develop confidence in a state's peaceful intentions in pursuit of nuclear power. Singapore also noted the importance of addressing the reasons for states' reluctance to implement the Additional Protocol. Singapore outlined different ways that it sought to support the IAEA including through hosting two regional outreach seminars conducted by the IAEA on the Additional Protocol in March 2011. Some participants also noted that such outreach could be conducted in the ARF context, including by providing information on national measures regarding nonproliferation and disarmament into ARF participants' contributions to the annual Security Outlook.