ASEAN DEFENCE MINISTERS’ MEETING-PLUS (ADMM-PLUS):
- Establishing an Experts’ Working Group –
- Concept Paper -

I. Introduction

1. The Fourth ADMM held on 11 May 2010 has adopted “ADMM Plus: Modalities and Procedures” which provide a set of principles and broad modalities to guide the establishment of the ADMM-Plus as a venue for the development of cooperation initiative between ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners. Furthermore, the First ADMM-Plus held in Ha Noi on 12 October 2010 adopted the Attachment Paper to the “ADMM-Plus: Modalities and Procedures” which task the ADSOM-Plus to establish an Experts’ Working Group (EWGs) on defense and security issues of mutual interests. At the time of the adoption of this paper, five areas of cooperation of mutual interests have been agreed upon: (a) Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR); (b) maritime security; (c) military medicine; (d) counter-terrorism; and (e) peacekeeping operations.

2. The EWGs shall establish working principles to encompass consensus-based decision-making at a pace comfortable to all participants, sustain gradual development and shall focus on action-oriented cooperation. This Concept Paper is developed in consistency with the “Outline of the Concept Paper on Establishing an Experts’ Working Group”. This Paper sets out principles and guidance for the establishment of EWGs within the ADMM-Plus.


II. Principle, Purpose and Objectives of the EWGs

4. Principle. The EWGs will promote consultation and cooperation within ADMM-Plus based on fundamental importance of amity and cooperation, ADMM-Plus establishment, as well as principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the UN Charter and other organized norms of international laws.

5. Purpose. To promote cooperation between defense and armed forces within the ADMM-Plus in the area of mutual interests.
6. **Objectives.** The EWGs shall address specific security issues of mutual concern affecting the region as follows:

   a. To strengthen regional capability in dealing with security challenges;

   b. To oversee activities and carry out initiatives;

   c. To facilitate joint training and joint exercises amongst the militaries of the ADMM-Plus members as a concrete step towards building capacity and enhancing capability; and

   d. To explore possible ways to build upon and contribute to existing security initiatives.

III. **Functions and Responsibilities of the EWGs**

7. The EWGs shall formulate and implement work plans and key milestones in the areas under their purview.

8. The EWG shall provide recommendation on the specific steps to cooperate in the relevant areas, and prepare progress reports to the ADMM-Plus through the ADSOM-Plus and the ADSOM-Plus Working Group.

9. The EWGs shall assist the ADSOM-Plus in implementing ADMM-Plus decisions in relevant areas.

IV. **Composition and Duties**

A. **Composition, Chairmanship and Duration**

10. An EWG shall be inclusive to all Members and attended by experts in the field of the EWG from the ASEAN and Plus countries. EWGs can implement approved workplans even if not all ADMM-Plus Member Countries are able to attend specific activities.

11. An EWG shall be co-chaired by an ASEAN Member State and a Plus Country. Co-chairs can be by self-nomination or nominated by ASEAN and Plus countries, and approved by ADSOM-Plus. Co-chairs shall serve for minimum two years and maximum three years. Co-chairs will rotate following their terms and will serve on a voluntary and consensus basis.

12. Any ADMM-Plus Member Country may propose the establishment of additional EWGs. The ADMM-Plus shall authorize the establishment of EWGs as required. The
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ADMM-Plus shall, when necessary, authorize the ADSOM-Plus to establish the EWGs in the intervening years between the ADMM-Plus meetings.

13. The EWG is to be dissolved when the ADMM-Plus assesses that the task of that particular EWG is completed.

B. Duties of EWG Co-Chairmanship, Members and the ASEAN Secretariat

14. The Co-chairs shall perform the following duties:
   a. Co-chair all EWG meetings;
   b. Determine the venue and schedule of the meeting;
   c. Coordinate and consult with other members on the initiative-related issues, agenda and tentative program for EWG activities;
   d. Chair the formulation of the EWG work plans;
   e. Lead and/or assist in the planning and the implementation of activities of the EWG;
   f. Ensure thorough assessment of all activities of the EWG;
   g. Provide recommendations to ADMM-Plus through the ADSOM-Plus; and
   h. Prepare progress reports to the ADMM-Plus through the ADSOM-Plus and the ADSOM-Plus Working Group.

15. The EWG non-chairing members shall perform the following duties:
   a. Participate in the planning, implementation and assessment of EWG activities; and
   b. May sponsor or co-sponsor one or more activities of the EWG, with the aid and supervision of the Co-chairs.

16. The ASEAN Secretariat shall perform the following duties:
   a. Provides support for the EWG;
   b. Provides information on the ASEAN cooperation activities upon request; and
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c. Keeps the records of the EWG’s activities.

V. EWG in Action and Its Reporting Procedures

17. EWG meetings shall be convened at least once a year.

18. All the outcomes, recommendations by the EWG shall be duly reported to and reviewed by the ADMM-Plus through the ADSOM-Plus and the ADSOM-Plus Working Group.

VI. Conclusion

19. The “Concept Paper on Establishing an Experts’ Working Group” shall act as guidance for all EWGs, so as to provide consistency to the effective functioning of all EWGs in their specific areas of activities. As such, the EWGs shall contribute to the common effort to strengthen regional defense and security cooperation through conduct of concrete and practical cooperation in addressing defense and security issues of mutual interests to contribute to regional peace and stability.