Introduction

1. In 2010, the ADMM-Plus was established to engage eight dialogue partners namely: Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the US, and promote practical cooperation with the said countries.

2. Since then, there has been an increasing demand or interest by the Non-Plus countries to join or become a member of the ADMM-Plus. However, the current sense within the ADMM-Plus is to deepen cooperation among existing members first before accepting other members. The 7th ADMM on 07 May 2013 in Brunei Darussalam endorsed the recommendation made by the ASEAN Defense Senior Officials’ Meeting (ADSOM) for the ADMM-Plus to consolidate and build on its initial success before expanding coverage.

3. As indicated in the Concept Paper on ADMM-Plus: Principles and Membership adopted at the 3rd ADMM in February 2009, the ADMM-Plus country shall be a full-fledged Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, have significant interactions and relations with ASEAN defense establishments and is able to work with the ADMM to build capacity so as to enhance regional security in a substantive manner.

4. It may also be worthwhile for the ADMM and ADMM-Plus to engage Non-Plus countries specifically in regard to observership of practical cooperation. For the Non-Plus countries, they could learn from the activities conducted by the ADMM-Plus through the Experts’ Working Groups (EWGs).

5. There should be a balance between addressing the increasing requests by Non-Plus countries to be involved in the ADMM-Plus while preserving the current modalities under the ADMM-Plus. Given this, a set of guidelines regarding modalities on how the ADMM and ADMM-Plus could engage the Non-Plus countries is useful.
6. Meanwhile, the work of the ADMM-Plus EWGs has resulted in tangible outcomes to include Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Terms of References (TORs). It is therefore essential to have an established modality whereby such could be approved by the ADMM and ADMM-Plus.

7. Likewise, as all EWGs’ activities are under the purview of the ADMM-Plus, a consolidated calendar of activities of EWGs would serve as a useful reference for ADMM-Plus in programming their resources.

8. The Additional Protocol to the Concept Papers for the Establishment of ADMM and ADMM-Plus adopted at the 8th ADMM in May 2014 provides for participation of non-government agencies and non-military/defense institutions in EWG activities as well as the approval process for initiatives and proposals of the ADMM-Plus. However, the participation of governmental entities in the EWGs’ activities as well as the approval process for SOPs and TORs emanating from the EWGs are not included in its scope.

**Objectives**

9. To further improve the ADMM and ADMM-Plus processes.

10. To serve as a framework for the ADMM and ADMM-Plus members to engage Non-Plus countries without undermining the ADMM and ADMM-Plus principles and processes.

11. To serve as guide in approving initiatives, particularly the outcomes of the EWGs.

**Participation of Non-ADMM-Plus Members in EWGs’ activities**

12. Participation of Non-Plus shall be guided by the following principles:

12.1. The engagement with Non-Plus countries should not dilute the ADMM and ADMM-Plus process.

12.2. Non-Plus countries shall not participate in EWG meetings.
12.3. Non-Plus countries shall only participate in EWG activities as observers. Such activities include seminars, workshops, and exercises.

12.4. Non-Plus countries shall only participate in one (1) EWG and at the most two (2) EWGs.

12.5. Each EWG shall only accommodate one (1) Non-Plus country per activity.

12.6. Non-Plus countries shall not contribute in organizing EWGs’ activities and shall not be provided with any courtesies during the said activities.

12.7. Participation of Non-Plus countries shall not in any way be interpreted as application for membership to the ADMM-Plus.

12.8. Participation as observer is not a guarantee or a basis for eventual membership in the ADMM-Plus.

Additional Approval Processes

13. On the participation of Non-Plus countries as observers in EWG activities, the ADSOM-Plus, through the ADSOM-Plus Working Group, shall approve the said application.

14. On the SOPs and TORs crafted by EWGs, these shall be approved by ADSOM and ADSOM-Plus through the ADSOM WG and ADSOM-Plus WG.

15. On EWGs’ calendar of activities, the ADMM-Plus shall adopt a consolidated calendar of EWGs every start of a three-year cycle of co-chairmanship. Said calendar to be prepared by the ADSOM-Plus Chair shall reflect the activities in the EWGs’ work plans (Annex A – Draft ADMM-Plus EWGs’ Indicative Calendar for 2017-2020).
Conclusion

16. This Concept Paper shall serve as a guide in engaging Non-Plus countries while preserving the current modalities under the ADMM and ADMM-Plus. This paper also serves as a guide in approving initiatives and documents resulting from the work of the EWGs.