Introduction

1. The second ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (herein after referred to as “ADMM”) held in Singapore on 14 November 2007 approved the ADMM-Plus Concept Paper which provides for the ADMM's engagement and interactions with ASEAN's friends and Dialogue Partners. The second ADMM acknowledged that ASEAN's future was increasingly intertwined with the developments of the larger Asia-Pacific region, and that the region would benefit from the expertise, perspectives and resources of extra-regional countries.

2. The ADMM-Plus Concept Paper adopted at the second ADMM in Singapore articulates the objectives for establishing an ADMM-Plus as well as the principles and broad modalities in establishing the ADMM-Plus. The principles serve to guide the evolution of the ADMM-Plus. The ADMM also agrees that a working group on the ADMM-Plus - which we termed the “Working Group on Establishing the ADMM-Plus”- reporting to the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials’ Meeting (ADSOM), be set up to finalise the modalities of the ADMM-Plus.

3. The ADMM’s aspiration to establish a robust, effective, open and inclusive regional security architecture, which would enhance regional peace and stability, and contribute to the realisation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community was also endorsed by our Leaders during the 13th ASEAN Summit in Singapore on 20 November 2007. The endorsement by our Leaders reaffirms the vision of ASEAN as captured in the Bali Concord II, adopted by our Heads of State/Government in 2003, which establishes the ASEAN Community as dynamic, resilient and outward-looking.
4. Pursuant to the decision of the second ADMM in Singapore that the modalities of ADMM-Plus be finalised, this Paper builds on the ADMM-Plus Concept Paper that was adopted on 14 November 2007. In so doing, this Paper sets out the principles for membership in the ADMM-Plus by countries outside ASEAN. The ADMM-Plus will be established when there is consensus amongst ASEAN Member States, and at a pace comfortable to all.

**Principles for Membership in the ADMM-Plus**

5. The ASEAN Vision 2020 adopted by our Heads of State/Government on 15 December 1997 in Kuala Lumpur envisaged an outward-looking ASEAN that plays a pivotal role in the international fora. Our Heads of State/Government also envisioned ASEAN having an intensified and mutually beneficial relationship with ASEAN’s friends and Dialogue Partners based on equal partnership and mutual respect. In this respect, the ADMM-Plus Concept Paper adopted by our Defence Ministers during the second ADMM outlines a set of principles and broad modalities that guides the establishment of the ADMM-Plus.

6. Consistent with the objectives, principles and modalities, enshrined within the ADMM-Plus Concept Paper for Establishing an ADMM-Plus, as well as ASEAN political-security related documents, membership to the ADMM-Plus, shall be guided by the following principles:

   a. The ADMM-Plus country shall be a full-fledged Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, where Dialogue Partners status is in accordance with the ASEAN Charter. ASEAN has had a long standing relationship with its Dialogue Partners. Cooperation with the Dialogue Partners is comprehensive and spans almost all ASEAN sectorals.

   b. The ADMM-Plus country shall have significant interactions and relations with ASEAN defence establishments. The existing level of trust, mutual understanding and comfort level amongst the defence establishments of ASEAN Member States with countries outside ASEAN would allow us to further expand and deepen interactions and cooperation with these extra-regional countries.
c. The ADMM-Plus country is able to work with the ADMM to build capacity so as to enhance regional security in a substantive manner. For the ADMM-Plus to add value to the overall ASEAN and ADMM processes, the ADMM-Plus country must be able to bring expertise, perspectives and resources to bear on shared security challenges. This allows the ADMM-Plus country to contribute constructively and work closely with ASEAN Member States to enhance regional security.

7. Subject to the principles for membership listed above, the ADMM shall only invite extra-regional countries to join the ADMM-Plus upon the consensus of all ASEAN Member States. Applications to participate in the ADMM-Plus shall be submitted to the Chair of the ADMM who will then consult the other members of the ADMM.

8. Subject to further discussions, the ADMM-Plus may be held once every three years, the frequency of which may be adjusted in the future based on the comfort-level of participants.

Conclusion

9. ASEAN today is faced with a set of common global security challenges, both traditional and non-traditional. Cooperation between countries, both within ASEAN and with countries in the larger Asia-Pacific, is required to address these challenges for the benefit of ASEAN. The ADMM acknowledges that non-ASEAN Member States are also keen to engage ASEAN in the area of defence and security as our security is increasingly intertwined. The ADMM’s active external engagement with the “Plus” countries will further enhance peace and stability in the region.