

The 22nd Tokyo Defense Forum (TDF)  
'Sakura Forum'  
Tokyo, 27 and 28 March 2018

Summary by the Chair

I. Introduction

1. The 22nd Tokyo Defense Forum (Forum for Defense Authorities in the Asia-Pacific Region) was held in Tokyo, on 27 and 28 March 2018, with the participation of 31 countries and organizations (Australia, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, Canada, People's Republic of China, the European Union (EU), Republic of Fiji, French Republic, India, Republic of Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, New Zealand, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Independent State of Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Republic of Singapore, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Kingdom of Thailand, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)).
2. The Forum was chaired by Mr. Osamu IZAWA, Director-General for International Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Japan.
3. The Forum had three themes on the agenda: "Situation of the Korean Peninsula," "Responses to various crises," and "Promotion of mutual confidence between defense authorities: communication and transparency."
4. Mr. Keitaro ONO, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Defense, made the opening remarks and welcomed the participants. He pointed out that not only coordination within Asia, but also close coordination with such regions as the Pacific region, the Indian Ocean region, and Europe are vital for improving the global security environment. He especially underlined the importance of the Indo-Pacific region, which is the center of the world's vitality, and explained that Japan is committed to promoting cooperation for peace and stability under the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" with countries that support it in order to

keep this region as free and open “international public goods,” and to secure the stability and prosperity of the whole region. He called for countries within and beyond the region to unite and stand against the common challenges.

## II. Session I: Situation of the Korean Peninsula

5. Japan, Republic of Korea, China and Malaysia made presentations about the Korean Peninsula situation. The presentations covered North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile related activities, and also recent moves over the Korean Peninsula including recent South-North contacts and an expected US-North Korea meeting. They also included the introduction of efforts to prevent ship-to-ship transfers of material to or from North Korean-flagged vessels, calls for North Korea’s abandonment of nuclear and ballistic missile program, moderation, and peaceful resolution of the issue.
6. Participants introduced their countries’ positions and actions regarding North Korea, including the issuance of the joint statement by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, suspension of trade, and the build-up of missile defense capabilities. They discussed various issues including how the security concerns posed by North Korea should be dealt with, and deterrence. Some participants also expressed concerns about the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction.
7. There was a consensus on the importance of complete of the Korea Peninsula as well as the effective implementation of the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

## III. Session II: Responses to Various Crises

8. The EU, France, the UK, Indonesia, the Philippines and Pakistan made presentations under the theme of “Responses to Various Crises.” The presentations included a comprehensive explanation of the refugee problem that Europe has been facing and an introduction of experiences of non-combatant evacuation operations (NEOs) in Africa and the Middle East. The presentations also covered the situation of worsening terrorism in South East and Central Asia, and efforts to counter terrorism.
9. Participants shared the view that there are multiple causes behind refugee

flows, including conflicts, economic factors, and climate change. Participants especially noted that climate change can exacerbate refugee problems in the future, which will bring about rise in sea level, including that in the South Pacific region. Some participants commented on the importance of civil-military coordination in responses to refugee problems. Some participants also pointed out the importance of naval forces as well as pressure put on them in dealing with a large scale refugee flow.

10. Some participants underlined the importance of inter-agency and international cooperation for NEO, while emphasizing unavoidable, unpredictable situations in conducting this type of operation. It was also pointed out that joint training of NEO can contribute to building confidence between countries. Some participants touched on the existing NEO joint training in bilateral and multilateral forms in the Asia-Pacific region.

11. Participants agreed that terrorism is a common challenge to all of us. Some participants emphasized the necessity of the whole government approach as well as international cooperation in fighting terrorism. Examples of international cooperation which were referred to included ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) Experts' Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, Sub-Regional Defence Ministers Meeting on Counter-Terrorism, Trilateral IndoMalPhil cooperation and Our Eyes Initiative.

#### IV. Session III: Promotion of Mutual Confidence between Defense Authorities: Communication and Transparency

12. Japan, Brunei, Singapore, Vietnam, Australia, Canada, India, Russia, ICRC and New Zealand made presentations on confidence building. The presentations covered communication among defense authorities, efforts to increase transparency of defense policies, and the Arms Trade Treaty, which contributes to the transparency of arms trade.

13. Some participants introduced their countries' efforts to promote policy-level communication and on-spot communication among defense authorities using bilateral and multilateral frameworks. Examples which were mentioned included international conferences hosted by participating countries; dialogues in ASEAN-led frameworks including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the

ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), and the ADMM-Plus; dialogues in other frameworks including the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA); the operationalization of the ASEAN Direct Communication Infrastructure (ADI); adoption of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) by the ADMM-Plus navies, and recent effort by ASEAN to establish new guidelines on air encounters between military aircraft.

14. Some participants explained their countries' efforts to increase the transparency of defense policy reviews, including consultations with public, experts, the parliament, etc. Participants also shared other efforts to promote transparency, such as the publication of white papers, increased coverage by the press, and the use of social media as a tool to provide information. A participant pointed out that transparency itself is not a goal, but a tool for promoting discussions and building trust and confidence. Some participants pointed out the fact that defense issues cannot be completely transparent, but participants also recognized the importance of enhancing transparency as a mean to secure accountability and credibility of policies.

15. Some participants explained some of the provisions of the ATT, the significance of the treaty, and their countries' efforts to promote it. They especially highlighted that the treaty is aimed at making arms trade responsible and transparent, which leads to the prevention of illicit arms trade and reducing human suffering, thereby bringing benefits to national and international security. Participants discussed challenges in effective port control and reporting system, and shared their countries' practices in implementing the treaty.

## V. Conclusion

16. During the sessions, participants expressed their views that the 22nd TDF took up issues important for defense authorities in the region and beyond. Participants expressed their appreciation to Japan as the host to organize this Forum for the promotion of regional defense dialogue and cooperation.

17. In concluding the Forum, the Chair expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to all participants for their support and valuable contributions to the Forum.