



CHAIR'S STATEMENT OF THE 33rd ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 23 JULY 2026

1. The Thirty-Third Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was held in Manila, Philippines, on 23 July 2026. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, under the ASEAN 2026 Chairship theme of "*Navigating Our Future, Together*".

2. The Meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers and Representatives of all ARF Participants, as well as the Secretary-General of ASEAN. The list of **Heads of Delegations** appears as **ANNEX 1**.

Overview of the ARF Process

3. The Meeting reaffirmed the ARF's role as the leading ASEAN-led forum for fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues in the Asia-Pacific region, with ASEAN as its primary driving force. Amidst an increasingly interconnected and complex regional security environment, the Meeting underscored the importance of confidence-building and preventive diplomacy, as well as strengthening dialogue and fostering practical cooperation among ARF Participants. In this regard, the Meeting encouraged continued efforts to enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of the ARF within the evolving regional architecture.

4. The Meeting expressed appreciation for the continued progress of the ARF in promoting political and security dialogue and cooperation, confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. The Meeting noted that, over the years, the ARF has contributed significantly to fostering mutual understanding, trust and confidence among its Participants and continues to serve as an important forum for dialogue on regional and international issues of common concern.

5. The Meeting recognised the impact of intensifying geopolitical tensions and the rising complexities in the evolving strategic and security environment. In this regard, the Meeting underlined the importance of strengthening dialogue and cooperation to promote regional peace, security, and resilience to ensure that the ARF remains responsive and contributes to the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The Meeting expressed confidence that the ARF Manila Plan of Action

2026-2036 (MPOA) would provide a timely and responsive strategic framework for ARF cooperation over the next decade through enhanced dialogue, confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy among ARF Participants.

6. The Meeting recalled the Recommendations to Revitalise the ARF adopted by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in October 2025 which appears as **ANNEX 2**, with a view to enhancing the ARF's effectiveness and relevance and complements the implementation of the MPOA. In this regard, the Meeting underscored the importance of maintaining the ARF as a forum for open and constructive dialogue while exploring practical measures to strengthen its work. The Meeting also recognised that updating the Vision Statement, in line with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the Manila Plan of Action 2026-2036, is needed to enhance the efficiency and agility of cooperation in the ARF to address security issues of common concerns, as well as threats to regional peace and security.

7. The Meeting reaffirmed its support for ASEAN Centrality and reiterated ASEAN's role as the primary driving force of the ARF. The Meeting encouraged all ARF Participants to continue contributing actively and constructively to the advancement of the ARF process, the implementation of the MPOA, and support for ASEAN-led efforts in addressing emerging and evolving regional security challenges. The Meeting emphasised that efforts to enhance the ARF process should be undertaken in accordance with the established ASEAN principles of consensus and consultation.

8. The Meeting welcomed the conclusion of the ARF Hanoi Plan of Action II 2020-2025 (HPOA II). The Meeting recognised the valuable efforts and contributions of ARF Participants to the implementation of the HPOA II and noted that achievements and lessons learned under the HPOA II provide a strong foundation for advancing the objectives of the MPOA.

Highlights of Discussions on International and Regional Issues

9. The Meeting welcomed the progress achieved under the five Inter-Sessional Meetings (ISMs), namely on Disaster Relief, Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC), Maritime Security, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs Security). The Meeting recognised that cooperation under these workstreams had contributed meaningfully to strengthening confidence, enhancing cooperation and addressing emerging security challenges in the region. Underlining the importance of these areas of cooperation and their cross-sectoral nature, the Meeting emphasised the importance of ensuring that ARF activities remain practical, action-oriented and responsive to the evolving security landscape. In this regard, the Meeting decided to extend the implementation period of the ARF Work Plan on CTTC and the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security until 2027.

10. The Meeting deliberated on existing cooperation and joint efforts to address various traditional and emerging threats to security. The Meeting commended the region's continued commitment to addressing the complex challenges posed by terrorism, violent extremism conducive to terrorism (VECT), and transnational organised crime, including online scams, inter alia through cross-sectoral and cross-pillar cooperation in border management and counter-terrorism, trafficking in persons, and illicit drugs. In this connection, the Meeting was encouraged by the efforts of all ARF Participants in supporting the implementation of the ARF Work Plan on CTTC 2024-2026, as well as its extension, in order to align efforts and ensure coherence with the MPOA. The Meeting also commended the ARF Participants' active participation in the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC). The Meeting also took note of the ongoing work under the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) in facilitating strategic information exchanges on countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism, radicalisation, and terrorism and the ADMM-Plus endeavours toward sharing experiences and best practices, as feasible, and enhancing capability through relevant capacity-building initiatives.

11. The Meeting recognised the increasing importance of security of and in the use of ICTs to economic growth and addressing the challenges arising from the rapidly changing ICT environment, including in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). In this regard, the Meeting welcomed and encouraged new initiatives undertaken to further promote confidence-building measures and trust through the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of ICTs (ISM on ICTs Security) and its open-ended study group. The Meeting underlined the need to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation in ensuring ICTs security, given its cross-sectoral nature.

12. The Meeting exchanged views on various challenges relating to the maritime domain, and shared concerns over piracy and armed robbery, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, the degradation of the marine ecosystem and biodiversity caused by the high and rapidly increasing levels of marine debris and marine pollution, and the importance of critical underwater infrastructure to regional connectivity. The Meeting noted the progress on maritime cooperation through raising public awareness, practical engagements, and continued constructive dialogue and the importance of coordination among various frameworks in addressing maritime challenges under the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS) and other ASEAN and ASEAN-led frameworks such as the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), the ADMM, the ADMM-Plus, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), as well as other similar arrangements such as the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).

13. The Meeting noted the need to further strengthen cooperation on disaster management, the region's heightened vulnerability to natural hazards, exacerbated by climate change and sea level rise. The Meeting underlined the importance of enhancing capacities and capabilities for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) through strengthened information sharing, exchange of best practices, and operational cooperation, including under the ambit of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR), as a key platform for advancing regional collaboration and emphasized the importance of coordination among ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ADMM, ADMM-Plus, and the AHA Centre, in addressing maritime challenges.

14. The Meeting reiterated the importance of strengthening international and regional cooperative efforts in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the peaceful uses of chemical, biological and nuclear technology, as well as advancing the ultimate goal of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and the prevention of their proliferation. The Meeting was pleased to note that the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) continues to provide a platform for dialogue and exchange of views on non-proliferation and disarmament issues. The Meeting encouraged the continued implementation of the Practical Arrangements (PA) between ASEAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Cooperation in the Areas of Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications, and Nuclear Safety, Security and Safeguards, which was signed in September 2019. The Meeting also took note of the sustained efforts of ASEAN entities and centres dedicated to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the peaceful uses of chemical, biological and nuclear technology, including ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) and the ASEAN Biological Threats Surveillance Centre (ABVC).

15. The Meeting called on the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) to fulfil their obligations in advancing nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to recognise the need to completely eliminate nuclear weapons, which remains the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances. The Meeting reiterated the commitment to preserving the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty.

16. The Meeting expressed concerns about the rise in non-traditional security issues, including transboundary challenges. The meeting expressed commitment to enhancing cooperation to address these security challenges, including issues related

to food, water and energy security, and health security, through concrete and practical activities, as well as further strengthening cooperation with Dialogue Partners, and other external parties to effectively address transboundary challenges.

Situation in the South China Sea

17. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety, and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and recognised the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, prosperity, and sustainable development. In this regard, the Meeting underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety. The Meeting looked forward to continued efforts in endeavouring to conclude the negotiation of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS, within this year. The Meeting emphasised the importance of self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea. The Meeting stressed the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties, and reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

Situation in the Middle East

18. The Meeting expressed serious concern over the rapidly evolving situation in the Middle East, particularly the renewed hostilities involving the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Meeting expressed deep concern as these developments severely undermine the ongoing efforts of key mediators and diminish the prospects for a peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy. The Meeting called on all parties concerned to exercise utmost self-restraint and avoid any acts that may further aggravate the situation. The Meeting underscored the importance of maintaining regional peace, stability and prosperity, upholding international law, and promoting genuine dialogue and diplomacy in addressing conflicts and tensions, including the need for a complete and immediate cessation of hostilities across all fronts in the Middle East. The Meeting expressed support for diplomatic efforts in bringing lasting and sustainable peace in the Middle East and commended the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, State of Qatar and all other parties involved for the collaborative efforts in this regard. The Meeting likewise expressed deep concern for the humanitarian situation in Lebanon and Gaza, and reiterated the obligations of all parties to protect civilians and civilian infrastructures in armed conflicts consistent with international law, including international humanitarian law, Charter of the United Nations, as well as relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

19. The Meeting acknowledged the further implications of the continued tensions in the Middle East on regional trade, energy, and food security, including energy markets and supply chains, agricultural production, and the stability of agricultural input supply chains, particularly fertilizers. The Meeting noted the ongoing initiatives, both at the regional and national levels, to promote measures to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of external shocks, and to support access to healthcare, and basic services for those affected, particularly those in vulnerable situations, through appropriate, timely and targeted responses. In this regard, the Meeting noted the preliminary recommendations developed by ASEAN to reinforce regional energy security, safeguard food security, maintain trade, supply chain, and market stability, strengthen financial resilience, and agreed to ensure their timely implementation.

Situation in the Korean Peninsula

20. The Meeting expressed concern over the recent developments in the Korean Peninsula and stressed the importance of resuming peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties in order to realise lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. The Meeting expressed grave concern over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) ongoing development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes in violation of relevant UNSC resolutions, which are worrisome developments that threaten peace and stability in the region. The Meeting called for the full implementation of all relevant UNSC Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. Diplomatic efforts, including the creation of a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties should remain a priority. The Meeting reiterated its readiness to play a constructive role, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere for peaceful dialogue amongst the concerned parties.

Developments in Myanmar

21. The Meeting expressed its deep concern over the ongoing conflicts and humanitarian situation in Myanmar, and encouraged progress on the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Five-Point Consensus (5PC). The Meeting noted ASEAN's united position that the 5PC remains its main reference to address the political crisis in Myanmar and further reaffirmed the relevant ASEAN Leaders' decisions. The Meeting denounced the continued acts of violence against civilians and public facilities and urged all parties involved to take concrete action to immediately halt indiscriminate violence, exercise utmost restraint, ensure the protection and safety of all civilians and civilian infrastructures, and create a conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people in need in Myanmar without discrimination, and inclusive national dialogue. The Meeting welcomed the continued progress in the provision of humanitarian assistance to Myanmar by the AHA Centre

in support of Point 4 of the ASEAN Leaders' 5PC. The Meeting noted with appreciation the contributions by ASEAN Member States, external partners, the United Nations (UN), the private sector and the continued support from all stakeholders in Myanmar that have enabled the AHA Centre to ensure an effective response. The Meeting also noted with appreciation the continued support from the international community for ASEAN in the implementation of the 5PC.

22. The Meeting expressed appreciation for the dedicated efforts of H.E. Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro as the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, since her appointment in January 2026. In carrying out her mandate, the Special Envoy has actively engaged a wide and diverse range of Myanmar stakeholders. The Special Envoy has also engaged ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, Myanmar neighbouring countries, international and regional partners, civil society organisations, humanitarian actors, and think tanks towards finding an inclusive and sustainable resolution to the crisis. This inclusive engagement reflects the ARF's commitment to collaborative efforts in addressing the complex challenges in the region. The Meeting noted the Special Envoy's plan to visit Myanmar in the last quarter of the year, aimed at further opening up space for humanitarian assistance efforts in Myanmar. The Meeting looked forward to the ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the 5PC at the 49th ASEAN Summit in November.

Review of Activities of the Current Inter-Sessional Year (2025-2026)

23. The Meeting expressed satisfaction with the success of the following ARF meetings and activities held in the Inter-Sessional Year 2025-2026:

- a. 3rd ARF Training on Ferry Safety Capacity Building, co-chaired by Cambodia and China in Jiangmen, China, on 10–14 November 2025;
- b. ARF Workshop on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism through Effective Reintegration, co-chaired by Malaysia, the European Union, and the United States in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 11–12 November 2025;
- c. 27th ARF Heads of Defence Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM), co-chaired by Cambodia and Canada in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 18–21 November 2025;
- d. ARF Workshop on Peace and Security in Outer Space, co-chaired by the Philippines, Singapore, and Australia in Makati City, the Philippines, on 26–28 November 2025;
- e. ARF Training on Developing Exercises to Counter CBRN Terrorism, co-chaired by the Philippines and the United States in Manila, the Philippines, on 20–22 January 2026;

- f. ARF Workshop on Lessons Learned in Governance of Security of and in the Use of ICTs, co-chaired by Thailand, Canada, and Japan in Bangkok, Thailand, on 9–10 February 2026;
- g. ARF Workshop on Critical Information Infrastructure (CII) Identification, co-chaired by the Philippines and Australia in Manila, the Philippines, on 13 April 2026;
- h. 17th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD), co-chaired by the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand in Manila, the Philippines, on 13–14 April 2026;
- i. 8th ARF ISM on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs Security) and 16th ARF Open-Ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs (OESG), co-chaired by the Philippines and Canada in Manila, the Philippines, on 15–16 April 2026;
- j. 18th ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) Meeting, co-chaired by Malaysia and Australia in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 16–17 April 2026;
- k. 22nd ARF ISM on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, co-chaired by the Philippines, Bangladesh, and the United States in Manila, the Philippines, on 17–18 April 2026;
- l. 24th ARF ISM on Disaster Relief, co-chaired by Viet Nam, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka via video conference on 23 April 2026;
- m. 17th ARF ISM on Maritime Security, co-chaired by Indonesia, India, and the United States in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 28–29 April 2026;
- n. ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue (DOD), co-chaired by the Philippines and New Zealand via video conference on 11 May 2026;
- o. ARF Inter-Sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs and PD), co-chaired by the Philippines and New Zealand in Manila, the Philippines, on 12–13 May 2026;
- p. ARF Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), chaired by the Philippines in Manila, Philippines, on 9 June 2026;
- q. 23rd ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC), chaired by the Philippines via video conference on 15 June 2026; and
- r. ARF Workshop on National and Regional Approaches to Incident Management of ICT-Enabled Critical Infrastructure, co-chaired by Singapore and the European Union in Singapore, on 21 July 2026.

24. The Meeting commended the work of the ARF SOM and the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD, and recognised the contributions made by defence officials to the ARF process, including through exchange of views and recommendations put forth at the ARF DOD and the 23rd ASPC.

25. The Meeting acknowledged the important role and valuable contributions of the ARF EEPs to the ARF's work and noted the recommendations of the 18th ARF EEPs Meeting. The Meeting looked forward to the EEPs' continued contributions to the ARF, including through workshops and increased collaboration with Track 2 bodies as deemed appropriate by their respective governments.

26. Noting that many Summary Reports of ARF meetings and activities have yet to be finalised, the Meeting requested the Co-Chairs of these meetings and activities to submit the respective final Summary Reports to the ARF Unit, which serves as the institutional memory and repository of ARF documents, by 1 December 2026. The Meeting also noted that as tasked by the 32nd ARF last year, the ARF Unit has developed and circulated templates for Co-Chairs' Summary Report, ARF Statements and ARF Concept Notes, with the hope that these templates will promote greater consistency across ARF activities.

Programme of Work for the Next Inter-Sessional Year (2026-2027)

27. The Meeting welcomed the incoming Chair and Co-Chairs for the period of 2026-2027:

- (a) Singapore as Chair of the 34th ARF, ARF SOM and 24th ASPC;
- (b) Singapore and ROK as Co-Chairs of the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD and ARF DOD;
- (c) Thailand, Bangladesh and Pakistan as Co-Chairs of the 25th ARF ISM on Disaster Relief;
- (d) Thailand, ROK and the U.S. as Co-Chairs of the 23rd ARF ISM on CTTC;
- (e) Philippines, Australia and New Zealand as Co-Chairs of the 18th ARF ISM on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament;
- (f) Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, and Australia as Co-Chairs of the 18th ARF ISM on Maritime Security;
- (g) Indonesia, Canada, and India as Co-Chairs of the 9th ARF ISM on ICTs Security;
- (h) Thailand and Australia as Co-Chairs of the 19th ARF EEPs; and
- (i) Philippines and Canada as Co-Chairs of the 28th Heads of Defence Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM).

28. The Meeting further noted that: 1) Thailand, Bangladesh, and Pakistan will continue to co-chair the ARF ISM on DR until 2029; 2) Thailand, ROK and the US will continue to co-chair the ARF ISM on CTTC until 2029; 3) Indonesia, Canada and India will continue to co-chair the ISM on ICTs Security until 2029; and 4) Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, Viet Nam, Australia and China will co-chair the ARF ISM on MS on a rotational basis until 2029.

29. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of the *Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocol*, adopted in 2020, as the primary reference document for the conduct of all ARF activities and initiatives, including work plans, concept papers and statements. The Meeting recalled that, in accordance with the ARF Guide, proposals should first be considered at the relevant ISM and ISG before being submitted to the ARF SOM for endorsement, and encouraged all ARF Participants to continue observing the Guide in order to ensure consistency and continuity in the ARF process.

30. The Meeting approved the List of ARF Track I Activities for the Inter-Sessional Year 2026-2027, which appears as **ANNEX 3** and expressed appreciation to the ARF Participants that had proposed to undertake these activities. The Meeting encouraged active participation in the approved activities and emphasised the importance of their effective implementation. The Meeting further encouraged Co-Chairs of ARF meetings and activities to convene their meetings in a timely manner, ahead of the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD and ARF SOM, in order to facilitate adequate consideration of their outcomes.

31. The Meeting expressed appreciation for the support provided by the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat in ensuring the continuity, effectiveness and institutional memory of the ARF process. The Meeting encouraged continued efforts to enhance consistency across ARF activities and documentation.

Future Direction of the ARF Process

32. The Meeting adopted the ARF Manila Plan of Action (MPOA) 2026-2036, which appears as **ANNEX 4**, as the principal guiding document for ARF cooperation over the next decade. The Meeting noted that the MPOA builds upon the achievements of the HPOA II while positioning the ARF to revitalise its mechanisms in order to respond effectively to current and future security challenges. The Meeting underscored that the MPOA would serve as a strategic roadmap for advancing dialogue, confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy and practical cooperation among ARF Participants. The Meeting tasked the Co-Chairs of the respective workstreams to facilitate discussions at the ARF ISMs and oversee the implementation and periodic review of the action lines under their respective areas. The Meeting also tasked proponents to reference in the Concept Notes of ARF initiatives the relevant MPOA action line that the activity will support or implement.

33. Underlining the importance of the ARF as a platform to build confidence and share information among its Participants, the Meeting reiterated the need to ensure constructive, equal, full and effective participation for all ARF Participants in all ARF activities.

34. The Meeting noted the need to review and update the existing ARF ISM Work Plans to ensure their consistency with the priorities and objectives contained in the MPOA. In line with the Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocol, the Meeting mandated the Co-Chairs of the ISM on DR, ISM on CTTC, ISM on NPD, ISM on MS, ISM on ICTs Security and ARF ISG on CBMs and PD, to undertake this process in consultation with all ARF Participants with a view to reaching consensus. In this regard, the Meeting instructed the ARF ISMs and workstreams to work towards the updating of the relevant Work Plans through the co-chairs to ensure their coherence and alignment with the MPOA.

35. The Meeting exchanged views on the issue of ARF participation, including the moratorium on new participation and the application of the United Kingdom to participate in the ARF. The Meeting recognised the importance of preserving the effectiveness and cohesion of the ARF, while upholding ASEAN Centrality and ASEAN's role as the primary driving force of the ARF. In this regard, the Meeting admitted the UK as the 28th ARF Participant as an exception to the moratorium in accordance with the Recommendations to Revitalise the ARF, noting the UK's strong engagement with ASEAN as one of its eleven (11) Dialogue Partners.

36. The Meeting welcomed the publication of the ARF Annual Security Outlook 2026. The Meeting noted that the publication continues to serve as a valuable confidence-building measure by enhancing transparency, promoting mutual understanding and facilitating exchanges of views on regional security developments among ARF Participants.

37. The Meeting expressed confidence that the ARF would continue to play an important role in promoting dialogue, cooperation, peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and reaffirmed its commitment to further strengthening the ARF as an ASEAN-led platform for addressing regional and international security challenges.
