

AN APPRAISAL OF THE ROLE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM, 1994-2007

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Introduction

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was inaugurated on 25 July 1994 in Bangkok by ASEAN - 6 in response to the general feeling among the nations of the Asia-Pacific area that a multilateral security arrangement was timely for the region. It was the realization of the 1992 Singapore Declaration of the Fourth ASEAN Summit which had proclaimed its desire to intensify ASEAN's external dialogue in political and security matters as a means of building cooperative ties with states in the Asia-Pacific region. The first meeting was attended by 18 states as follows: The six ASEAN members consisting of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand; seven ASEAN's Dialogue Partners consisting of Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea and the United States; two ASEAN's Consultative Partners comprising China and Russia; and three ASEAN's Observers, consisting of Laos, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam.¹

Since its formation in 1994, the ARF has come a long way and now (2007) boasts of a membership of 27 members.² However there is a great deal of criticism that the ARF is ineffective in organization – a “talk-shop” which has become practically irrelevant. In these circumstances an evaluation of its achievements would be most appropriate.

The Formation of The ARF

The quest for regional security by the Southeast Asian states in their efforts aimed at nation building has been the primary impetus behind the formation of ASEAN in 1967 and its subsequent development. The 1971 ZOPFAN Declaration; the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation; the 1976 ASEAN-Concord; AFTA in 1992; the ARF in 1994, the South East Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) of 1997; the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) forum, 1997; and the expansion of ASEAN membership in the 1990s all attest to the importance of this factor.³

In the 1990s the security dimension once again loomed to the surface as a result of the end of the Cold War and the rapid rise of China and Japan as regional powers in Northeast Asia. The end of the Cold War created a power vacuum in Southeast in the wake of the collapse of the USSR and American intentions to reduce their military presence in the region. This raised fears of the possibility of the new regional powers, especially China, upsetting the states quo in the region by adopting an expansionist posture.⁴ The situation in Northeast Asia then, as it is now, was far from stable and

could easily degenerate into a dangerous confrontation, even a war. It was in these circumstances that the idea of an Asia-Pacific security forum was born.

The initial proposal for a security dialogue for the Asia-Pacific region in fact came from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987 when he called for a Pacific conference to avoid a military confrontation in Northeast Asia. This was followed in 1990 by a call by Australia for the formation of a Conference for Security and Cooperation in Asia and by Canada for a North Pacific Cooperative Security Dialogue, both based on the lines of the Conference for Security Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) ⁵

Initially, these proposals did not find favour either with the United States of America which preferred its own bilateral arrangements with Northeast Asian countries, or with ASEAN – 6 which feared the imposition of strict legalistic and institutional requirements of the CSCE. However as the urgency for an Asia-Pacific security forum grew immediately after the end of the Cold War in 1991, both became more amenable to the idea. ASEAN especially did not want to be pushed to the sidelines in the event such a forum were to materialize. It therefore moved quickly and decidedly to ensure that it was in the driver's seat and that it set the agenda of the new forum. There was also growing support for ASEAN taking the lead by Japan. In the July 1991 ASEAN-PMC meeting, Japan's Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama proposed that the PMC could be a relevant platform for a dialogue on security matters in the region.⁶

The proposal was fully supported by the 1991 PMC. The PMC was established in 1978 where foreign ministers of ASEAN states and its dialogue partners met immediately after the annual AMM meetings. The PMC was specifically set-up for ASEAN to have greater economic cooperation with western powers and Japan. In 1974 Australia became the first dialogue partner. By 1991 there were seven dialogue partners which were, Australia, Canada, the European Community, the United States, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea.⁷

At the Fourth ASEAN Summit held in January 1992 in Singapore, ASEAN leaders declared their desire to intensify dialogue in political and security matters affecting the Asia-Pacific region using the PMC ⁸ Alan Collins remarks on the decision to use the PMC as the vehicle for discussing political and security issues in the Asia-Pacific region as follows: ⁹

The use of the PMC framework offered ASEAN the advantage of having a controlling influence over the agenda, thus placing the organization [ASEAN] at the centre of the process.

The United States, under the Clinton Administration which came into power in 1993, also lent public support to the conceived multilateral security dialogue. That left China and Russia. In 1992 ASEAN roped them in as its consultative partners which paved the way for the new forum to take off. Called the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) it was inaugurated in July 1994 in Bangkok.

Having assumed the leadership, ASEAN members wished to imbibe the new organizations with the specific ASEAN flavour of the "ASEAN Way". Thus a serious

attempt was made to blend the ASEAN principles of consultation and consensus (*musyawarah* and *maufakat*) with confidence building and preventive diplomacy to contain conflict in the region. The very vastness of the region and the peculiar manner in which it had developed over the past five decades also meant that a security arrangement had to be multilateral in nature, and more of a forum for cooperative endeavour than an alliance or a formal mechanism. In essence the ARF is a concert, an ASEANA concert. Shankari Sundararaman commented as follows: ¹⁰

In the absence of traditional balance-of-power politics [in Northeast and Southeast Asia], the development of a security arrangement became more of a concert where the entire fabric would weave together relevant actors...in essence, a concert formula of arrangement brings together countries in a grouping which has inclusive membership, regardless of whether the states concerned have had past hostilities or friendship

FACTORS FOR THE FORMATION OF THE ARF

Several factors may be cited for the formation of the ARF. These may include ASEAN's concern for regional security arising out of the turmoil in the Indochina region in the 1980's; the uncertainty syndrome resulting from the end of the Cold War in the 1990's; the desire by ASEAN to expand the "ASEAN Way" to the Asia-Pacific Region; the expanding economic networks in the Asia-Pacific region; and the Balance of Power factor.

The Turmoil In The Indochina Region In the 1980s

For ASEAN, the fundamental consideration, as mentioned above, has always been the security of the region. In 1980's the security situation in Southeast Asia took a turn for the worse, primarily as a result of developments in Indochina. These events, just to mention a few main ones, included the American withdrawal from South Vietnam; the fall of Saigon to North Vietnamese forces in 1975; the ruthless rule of Pol Pot in Cambodia from 1976-1978; the "invasion" of Cambodia by Vietnamese forces in 1978; and the exodus of hundreds of thousands of "boat people" who inundated the shores of many neighbouring Southeast Asian countries, especially Malaysia. These traumatic events produced in the minds of ASEAN leaders a shift in the security paradigm of the region – that it was inevitable to expand the security dialogue to regional powers and even neighbouring sub-regions.¹¹

The Uncertainty Produced By The End Of The Cold War

As mentioned earlier, the end of the Cold War in 1991 created immense fears in Southeast Asia of the possibility of regional powers, especially China, upsetting the status quo in the region by attempting to fill the power vacuum created by the demise of the USSR and American intentions to withdrawal from the area. ASEAN therefore saw the necessity of initiating an Asia-Pacific security dialogue as a means of

managing this uncertainty by building trust in the region; by engaging China in cooperative security; by keeping the United States as a major player in the power balance in the Asia-Pacific; and by building institutions for norms of behaviour in cooperative security undertakings.¹²

The Prevalence Of An Explosive Situation In Northeast Asia

North-East Asia is a very unsettled region saddled by old enmities; the unresolved problems of a divided Korea; the issue of North Korea's policy of nuclear armaments; the Taiwan debacle; and rising confrontations between China and Japan.¹³ As mentioned earlier, this region is very volatile and there is a real possibility of an armed clash breaking out. In 1987 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, seeing the possibility of such a likelihood taking place, called for a Pacific conference as a preventive measure. The formation of the ARF was partially designed to defuse the tense situation in Northeast Asia, and especially to bring about a reconciliation between the two Koreas.¹⁴

ASEAN's Desire To Expand The Principles Of The "ASEAN Way" To The Asia-Pacific Region

As has been discussed, another reason for ASEAN taking the lead in forming the ARF was its desire to expand the use of the principles of consultation, consensus, confidence building, and preventive diplomacy to the Asia-Pacific wide forum to contain conflict in the region.

Increased Economic Interdependence In The Asia-Pacific Region In The 1980s

The rapid economic development in Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia in the 1980's which led to the emergence of the Asian Tigers and the subsequent growth of inter-regional trade and commerce gave birth to multilateral economic dialogue in the region, culminating in the formation of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum in 1989.¹⁵ Multilateral economic dialogue therefore not only preceded security dialogue in the region, but may have been an important catalyst in the emergence of the latter.

The Balance Of Power Factor

Another important argument advanced for the formation and working of the ARF by scholars is the balance of power factor.¹⁶ This factor is closely related to the second reason discussed above for the formation of the ARF, that is the uncertainty syndrome that prevailed at the end of the Cold War. Ralf Emmers describes the balance of power factor in the formation and working of the ARF as follows:¹⁷

The balance of power factor within co-operative security involves a denial of intramural hegemony. This consideration is intended to

contain a disposition to hegemony on the part of a rising power by integrating it within a rule-based arrangement that provided sufficient incentive to contain hegemonic ambitions. It will be claimed that the ARF was conceived as an instrument for ensuring a continued U.S. involvement in East Asia, and for including the People's Republic of China (PRC) in a rule-based arrangement to encourage it in the practice of good international behaviour.

In fact, in Southeast Asia, great concern was caused by the withdrawal of American military forces from Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines in 1992. Alarmed by the prospect of the emergence of a dangerous power vacuum in the region and to forestall the rise of a regional hegemon such as China, Japan or India, ASEAN quickly transformed its previous policy of attempting to keep out big power involvement (ZOPFAN) by actively engaging them to maintain a power equilibrium in the region. In this context serious attempts were made by a number of Southeast Asian states to court the United States to persuade it to remain as an active player in the region. The lead in this direction was taken by Singapore in 1990 when an agreement was reached with the United States whereby Singapore supports the United States Seventh Fleet's role of patrolling the sea-lanes between the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. Indonesia and Malaysia followed suit in 1992 by allowing the United States to service its naval ships at Surabaya and Lumut respectively.¹⁸ In addition, ASEAN considers that United States presence in the region was especially vital for maintaining stability in the troubled waters of the South China Sea. Renato Cruz De Castro opines as follows:¹⁹

The United States has been regarded [by ASEAN] as the "principal outside balancer" that is needed to check the more troublesome neighbouring states with whom it has a long history of contention and to keep the middle powers (Japan and China) in their proper places in the regional hierarchy of power

In addition to these bilateral arrangements with the United States, by ASEAN member states, ASEAN as a whole saw the benefits of using the ARF arrangement to incorporate the balance of power factor on an institutional basis and thus moved decidedly to take the initiative in 1994.

The Progress And Achievements Of The ARF

The ASEAN Concept Paper

As a result of the deliberations that took place at its inception in Bangkok in July 1994, and the second meeting held in Brunei Darussalam in August 1995, the ARF produced a Concept Paper which can be considered a blueprint for its policies, operations and goals.²⁰

As gleaned from these documents, the overall goal is to sustain and enhance the peace and prosperity prevailing in the regions as a result of the dramatic strides made in economic growth. Such a concern arose out of recognition of the inherent inevitability of conflict emerging as a consequence of shifts taking place in power relations due to the rapid economic growth in the region. In undertaking this mammoth task of preserving peace, the ARF was not dogmatic in outlook. While trying to promote the emulation of the ASEAN Way, the ARF was ready to accept and recognize different approaches to peace and security that may be advanced by fellow members. The concept of security itself was taken in a very comprehensive sense to include military, political, economic and social issues.

The ARF was also realistic and modest in approach. Being a young “fragile” organization, and acutely aware of the serious residual unresolved political and territorial problems prevailing in the region, the ARF advocated a cautious step by step progress. Realising that even the basic prerequisite of a sense of cooperation and trust was absent in the region (except within ASEAN), the ARF’s first priority, as highlighted at its first meeting was the goal “to develop a more predictable constructive pattern of relationships for the Asia-Pacific region...” Since the region lacked even this basic degree of mutual confidence, it was thought unwise to establish mechanisms for conflict resolution in the immediate future. Mechanisms were perceived as building and intrusive and required a high degree of integration to be accepted by all the members. In the circumstances, institutionalization was not recommended in the initial stage. The concluding paragraph of the Concept Paper captures the tone of the delegates pertaining to this issue as follows:²¹

The ARF must be accepted as a “sui generis” Organisation . It has no established precedents to follow. A great deal of innovation and ingenuity will be required to keep the ARF moving forward while at the same time ensure that it enjoys the support of its diverse participants.

Notwithstanding the emphasis on a gradual approach, the ultimate goal of the ARF is the establishment of full-fledged mechanisms for conflict-resolution so that a sense of community is created among the nations of the Asia-Pacific region. For the ARF to be a meaningful and effective vehicle for the enhancement and maintenance of peace in the region, it will have to emerge as a potent organization able to deal with actual crises in the future.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OPERATIVE STRUCTURES

Since the ARF advocated a gradual approach and since the immediate priority was to foster trust and cooperation, the line of action considered appropriate was to promote and develop Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) and Preventive Diplomacy (PD). Conflict-Resolution Mechanisms were considered a long-term objective. As such the very minimum of institutions were established. The ARF does not have a Secretariat of its own. Its activities are organized by the holder of the current ASEAN Chair which is held in rotation annually by the Foreign Ministers of member ASEAN

countries. The ARF in fact has replaced the annual ASEAN-PMC. Nevertheless, the ARF has established important operative structures to spearhead its activities. The first is called Track One which is an inter-governmental organ. The second. Called Track Two consists of strategic institutes and relevant non-governmental organizations from ARF countries such as ASEAN-ISIS. The ARF also established the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) to help boost the activities of Track Two. The general consensus at the 1995 ARF meeting was that Track One would concentrate on measures to be taken in the immediate future, while Track Two was to look into long-term measures.

The 1995 meeting also outlined a number of short-term and long-term measures. To help the next Chairman review these proposals, two inter-governmental sub-committees were established. One was the Inter-sessional Support Groups (ISGs) on CBMs and PD, and the other, the Inter-sessional Meetings (ISMs) on Cooperative Activities especially Peacekeeping. It was also agreed that Indonesia and Japan would co-chair the ISGs on CBMs, and PD, Malaysia and Canada would co-chair the ISMs on Peacekeeping Operations; and Singapore together with the United States would lead the ISMs on Search and Rescue Coordination and Cooperation.²²

DECISION ON THE “GEOGRAPHICAL FOOTPRINT”, 1996

In 1996, the ARF produced a body of guidelines and principles governing the admission of new members into the forum. The issue was causing some concern as ASEAN itself was expanding and the Asia-Pacific region was too large in terms of geographical spread. It therefore became imperative to clearly define the “geographical footprint” of the area. The Foreign Ministers at the 1996 ARF meeting agreed that this “geographical footprint would cover all of East Asia (both Northeast and Southeast Asia) as well as Oceania”. Another issue ironed out was the agreement that all new members of ASEAN would automatically become members of ARF. This greatly removed ASEAN’s apprehensions of being swallowed in a larger organization and ensured its special role in ARF.²³

PROGRESS ON CBMs

In terms of the progress made in the development of CBMs some of the measures implemented were:²⁴

- (a) 1998 : The ISG on CBMs produced a set of matrices and tables, including a summary table showing the degree of implementation of agreed ARF CBMs.
- (b) In 2000, the ARF had established the ARF Register of Experts/Eminent Persons.
- (c) In 2000 the first volume of the ARF Annual Security Outlook (ASO) was ready. It consisted of defense policy statements and defence policy papers submitted by individual countries on a voluntary basis at the Track One level. The aim of such an exercise was to create transparency so as to promote confidence and understanding as well as facilitate the exchange of views among ARF participants.

- (d) In 2000 another achievement was the establishment of the ARF Regional Maritime Information Center (ARF-RMIC), which was the outcome of a seminar held by the ISG in Beijing. These are just a few the myriad activities of the ARF. The more important achievements are discussed in greater detail below.

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THE KOREAN PENINSULA

The ARF began to openly discuss the Korean peninsular crisis in its deliberations in 2001. At the Tenth ARF meeting at Phnom Penh on 18 July 2003, the ARF ministers strongly supported denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. They also urged North Korea to resume its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.²⁵

By 2006, however, ARF's role in reducing tension in the Korean peninsula had declined to a bare minimum. ARF was in fact reduced to supporting the initiatives being taken by other parties, chiefly the Six Party Talks group. In 2007 the ARF Ministers welcomed the agreements reached by the said group at their Sixth Round meeting held from 18-20 July 2007 in Beijing where the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced its commitment to a complete shutdown of all its nuclear facilities.²⁶

A CODE OF CONDUCT IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

ASEAN and ARF have been working hard on establishing a code of conduct in the South China Sea so that outstanding conflicting claims in the area can be peacefully resolved or managed. Work on carving out this code of conduct started with consultations between ASEAN and China in 2001. On 4 November 2002, ASEAN and China signed the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) at Phnom Penh. To oversee the implementation of the DOC, the ASEAN-China Joint Working Group was established and subsequently held meetings in Manila in 2005, and in Hainan in 2005 and 2006. In the 2007 ARF, the Ministers expressed satisfaction that the DOC had been effective in building "mutual trust and confidence among the claimants in the area and in maintaining peace and stability in the region". They expressed the hope that these efforts would eventually lead to the conclusion of a Regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.²⁷

Maritime Security And Management Of The Straits of Malacca

The rising incidence of piracy at sea in the Asia-Pacific region in the 1990s drew the ARF's attention to the question of maintaining maritime security in 1997. Sustained efforts in this direction led to the establishment of the ARF Regional Maritime Information Center (ARF-RMIC) in 2000. Meanwhile various anti-piracy workshops were held especially in Mumbai, India in 2000 and 2003. One concrete outcome was the adoption by member states of the ARF Statement on Cooperation Against Piracy and Other Threats to Maritime Security in 2003. In 2005, four more areas for

promoting maritime security were identified. These included multilateral cooperation, operational solutions, shipping and port security, and application of technology for maritime safety and security.²⁸

In 2005 the management of the Straits of Malacca was brought into the ambit of the ongoing work on maritime security. In this context, the issues at stake were on the one hand the question of ensuring the safety of navigation, environmental protection and maritime security. On the other hand there were the sensitive questions of the sovereign rights of the three littoral states of Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore and the legitimate interests of the international community.²⁹

Some progress toward managing these issues was achieved at the 2005 meeting in Bantam Indonesia between the Foreign Ministers of the three littoral states, the meeting of the Chiefs of Defence Forces of these three states and Thailand in Kuala Lumpur in 2005; and the Jakarta Meeting on the Straits of Malacca and Singapore hosted by Indonesia and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on 7-8 September 2005. In January 2007 further efforts to enhance maritime security was made with the holding of the ARF Maritime Security Shore Exercise in Singapore In 2007. The ARF Ministers noted with some satisfaction that the various measures undertaken since 2000 to enhance maritime security had significantly reduced piracy in the region and the Straits of Malacca.³⁰

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

In the aftermath of the September 11 tragedy, ASEAN and the ARF began to pay serious attention to the problem of international terrorism and to find ways to curb the menace. The issue was discussed extensively in the 2002 ARF meeting. At this meeting the ARF discussed concrete measures to stop the financing of terrorism. As a follow up, the first Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC) was held in Sabah from 21-22 March 2003. The ISM which was co-chaired by Malaysia and the United States came out with a comprehensive paper entitled "Cooperative Counter-Terrorist Action On Border Security" which provided guidelines for ARF members to strengthen their border security. Another outcome of the 2003 ISM on CTTC in Sabah was the establishment of a regional centre on counter-terrorism in Kuala Lumpur in the same year called the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT).³¹

Further ISMs on CTTC were held in Manila, (2004), Bangkok, (2005), China, (2006): and Singapore (2007) The fourth ISM on CTTC co-chaired by Brunei and China and held in Beijing from 26-28 April 2006, prepared a comprehensive report called the "ARF Statement On Promoting A People-Centred Approach To Counter Terrorism" The main ARF body subsequently tasked the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat to prepare a comprehensive compilation of all hitherto commitments on CTTC made by member states. The result was the ARF Cooperation Framework on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime which was endorsed by the ARF (2007).³² Tanya Ogilvie-White is however of the opinion that the ARF concentrates more on the prevention of conventional terrorism rather than on non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, with some exceptions, such as the ASEAN Region Forum

Statement on Non-proliferation issued at the 11th ARF held in Jakarta on 2 July 2004.
³³

An Appraisal and Conclusion

These are some of the countless, albeit, limited achievements of the ARF. There are many shortcomings of the ARF but its success has to be viewed from the perspective of its limited objectives of fostering cooperation, dialogue, confidence building measures, and preventive diplomacy rather than resolving conflicts.³⁴

In this respect its greatest achievement has been the bringing together of so many diverse interests in a security forum in a region which had no such experience or antecedent. Especially significant is the fact that the ARF seems to be the only forum where the countries of Northeast Asia can sit together and forge linkages. This ability in bringing together countries of a dynamic but divided and potentially explosive region has produced greater dialogue amongst Northeast Asian countries and speeded up the process of reconciliation in the region.

The role and relevance of the ARF has also to be seen in the context of recent developments in the world especially after September 11, which have brought about new changes concerning security. Even before this historic event especially in the post-Cold War era, there has been a proliferation of security and economic multilateral consultative forums in the Asia – Pacific Region. Some of these are the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum formed in 1989; the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) formed in 1992; the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) established in 1994 for undertaking security dialogue in the region; and the 1997 ASEAN Plus Three (APT) forum between ASEAN, China, Japan and South Korea for economic cooperation. After September 11 however, security seems to have become the bandwagon of every conceivable forum in the region.

The concern for security issues affecting the Asia-Pacific Region, for example, is no more the exclusive preserve of the ARF. Recent developments have shown that since 2000 the APT has also led to closer dialogue between China, Japan and South Korea on their own for resolving security issues in Northeast Asia which has spawned the East Asia Co-operation Forum. In 2003 and 2005 the Asian Senior level Talks on Proliferation (ASTOP) were held in Tokyo to put in place mechanisms in the region to prevent Weapons of Mass Destruction proliferation. Since 2002, APEC's agenda has moved strongly towards security, especially with the formation of the Counter-Terrorism Task Force (CTTF) at the Los Cabos APEC meeting in that year. This development has caused much resentment among ASEAN members.³⁵

Last year's APEC summit in Hanoi (18-19 November 2006) shows a similar disturbing trend where United States President, George W. Bush pushed his security agenda on North Korea as well, into the discussion. This has raised fears among some ASEAN leaders, including the Prime Ministers of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and the Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong that some of these forums in the region, including APEC may in fact become irrelevant if they do not

stick to their avowed functions and agendas.³⁶ Abdullah Ahmad Badawi aptly voiced this concern as follows:³⁷

Apec should also return to its original purpose as an instrument for promoting economic growth through fostering freer, and fairer, flow of trade. Its assumption of some security role following the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States has compromised its original purpose and blurred its focus. It is critical that we preserve the integrity of the respective processes. We must not allow the pursuit of narrow national interests to subvert the integrity of one process against the other process.

Another issue that has complicated the problem of focus, direction and analysis is the rapidly changing face of security itself. Until and during the Cold War period, security largely and sometimes exclusively meant external military and political threats to the sovereignty of the state and has often been referred to as traditional security. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the meaning of security has been undergoing radical change. In this respect it has witnessed a widening and deepening of its scope.³⁸ In terms of expanding its horizon, security nowadays encompasses such areas as economic, social and environmental security. In terms of the deepening process, the emphasis is not confined to state security alone, but includes global security; security of the international system (including regional security involving the concepts of regional security complexes and security communities); state security; and more importantly, security of individuals and groups within states or human security.³⁹ Ken Booth, another well known scholar equates security to emancipation. Below is how he defines security:⁴⁰

Security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin.
Emancipation, not power or order, produces true security.
Emancipation, theoretically, is security.

The concept of security is therefore a very nebulous subject with different people emphasizing different aspects. It is in the context of these developments, that is, the mushrooming of dialogue forums with overlapping agendas; the ever-changing concept of security; and the special emphasis given to confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy by the ARF, that a realistic appraisal of the organization should be made.

Thus the ARF's achievements may be described as modest, but significant. However, the ARF must seriously embark on the development of comprehensive conflict-resolution mechanisms if it is going to be an effective organization in security management in the region.

End Notes

1. *Chairman's Statement, The First ASEAN Regional Forum*, Bangkok, 25 July 1994, pp.1-2. For recently published comprehensive study on the ASEAN

Regional Forum (ARF) see a Mely Caballero-Anthony, *Regional Security In Southeast Asia: Beyond The ASEAN Way*, Singapore, Institute Of Southeast Asian Studies, 2005.

2. The fourteenth meeting of the ARF was held on 2 August 2007 in Manila. At this meeting, Sri Lanka was admitted as the 27th member of the organization. *Chairman's Statement, 14th ASEAN Regional Forum*, Manila, 2 August 2007, p.1.
3. See Mark G. Rolls, "Security Co-operation in Southeast Asia: An Evolving Process", Colin McInnes and Mark G. Rolls (eds), *Post-Cold War Security Issues in the Asia-Pacific Region*, Ilford, Essex. Frank Cass & Co., 1994, pp. 56-79; and Daljit Singh, "Evolution of the Security Dialogue Process in the Asia-Pacific Region", Derek Da Cunha (ed.), *Southeast Asian Perspectives On Security*, Singapore, ISEAS, 2000, pp. 36-59.
4. Renato Cruz De Castro, "Managing Strategic Unipolarity: The ASEAN State's Response to the Post-Cold War Regional Environment", Derek Da Cunha, *Southeast Asian Perspectives on Security*, pp. 63-74
5. Daljit Singh, "Evolution of the Security Dialogue in the Asia-Pacific Region", p.40
6. Alan Collins, *Security And Southeast Asia: Domestic, Regional And Global Issues*: Singapore Institute Of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003, p. 172
7. By 1996, China, Russia and India were also admitted, bringing the membership to ten.
8. *Chairman's Statement, the First ASEAN Regional Forum*, Bangkok, 25 July 1994, pp. 1-2
9. A. Collins, *Security And Southeast Asia*, p- 172
10. Shankari Sundararaman, "The ASEAN Regional Forum: Reassessing Multilateral Security in the Asia-Pacific", <http://www/idsa-india.org/an-jul 8-11.htm>.
11. See Muthiah Alagappa, *The National Security Of Developing States: Lessons From Thailand*, Kuala Lumpur: Institute Of Strategic And International Studies, Malaysia, 1987, pp. 78-142 Also see Diane K. Mauzy, *Politics In The ASEAN States*, Kuala Lumpur: Marican & Sons, 1984, pp. 241-262; and Mohammed Ayoob and Chai-Anan Samudavanija, (eds.), *Leadership Perceptions And National Security: The Southeast Asian Experience*, Singapore: Institute Of Southeast Asian Studies, 1989, p. 155
12. Daljit Singh, "Evolution of the Security Dialogue in the Asia-Pacific Region", p. 36

13. See Mely Caballero-Anthony, *Regional Security In Southeast Asia*, pp. 113-156
14. Developments in the Korean Peninsular have featured regularly in ARF meetings
15. See Mely Caballero-Anthony, *Regional Security In Southeast Asia*, pp. 113-156
16. See for example Ralf Emmers, "The Influence of the Balance of Power Factor within the ASEAN Regional Forum", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 23, Number 2, August 2001, pp. 275-291; Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, "Catching the Dragon's Tail: China and Southeast Asia in the 21st Century", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 25, No. 1, April 2003, pp. 65-78
17. Ralf Emmers, "The Influence of the Balance of Power Factor within the ASEAN Regional Forum",
18. Renato Cruz De Castro, "Managing Strategic Unipolarity", pp. 62-64
19. *Ibid*; pp. 65-65
20. The relevant documents are: *Chairman's Statement, The First ASEAN Regional Forum*, Bangkok 25 July 1994; *Chairman's Statement, The Second ASEAN Regional Forum*, Brunei Darussalam, 1 August 1995, pp. 1-4, and *The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper*, pp. 1-4
21. *Concept Paper*, p.4
22. *Chairman's Statement, The Second ASEAN Regional Forum*, 1995, pp. 2-3
23. *Chairman's Statement, The Third ASEAN Regional Forum*, Jakarta, 23 July 1996, pp. 1-7
24. See the following documents: *Summary Report of the Meetings of the ARF Inter-Sessional Group On Confidence Building Measures*, 1996, pp. 1-4; and *Chairman's Statement ASEAN Regional Forum*, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001
25. *Chairman's Statement, Tenth ASEAN Regional Forum*, Phnom Penh, 18 June 2003, p. 3
26. *Chairman's Statement, ASEAN Regional Forum*, 2006, p.3 and 2007, p.2
27. *Chairman's Statement, ASEAN Regional Forum*, 2001, p.4; 2003, p.5; 2005, p.4; 2006, p.5; and 2007, p.2

28. See *Chairman's Statement ASEAN Regional Forum*, 1997, p.4; 2001, p.7; and 2003, p.5, and Annex D; and 2005, p.5
29. For a historical treatment of the subject, see Murugesu Pathmanathan, *Readings In Malaysian Foreign Policy*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1979, pp. 32-61
30. *Chairman's Statement, ASEAN Regional Forum*, 2006, pp. 6-7; and 2007, p.4
31. See *ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Statement On Cooperative Counter-Terrorist Action On Border Security*, 2003, pp. 1-4
32. *ASEAN Regional Forum Statement On Promoting A People-Centred Approach To Counter Terrorism* 2006, pp. 1-3; and *Annex 8, Chairman's Statement, ASEAN Regional Forum*, 2007
33. Tanya Ogilvie-White, "Non-proliferation and Counter-terrorism Cooperation in Southeast Asia: Meeting Global Obligations through Regional Security Architectures?", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2006) p.16
34. There have been a few reviews of the ARF. Among there are: Mohamed Jawhar, "The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Critical Appraisal: ,2001 <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/symposia/pacific2001/jawharpaper.htm> pp. 1-7; and Dominik Heller, "The Relevance of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) For Regional Security in the Asia-Pacific", *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27, no. 1 (2005): pp. 123-145
35. See Tanya Ogilvie-White, "Non-proliferation and Counter-terrorism Cooperation in Southeast Asia: Meeting Global Obligations through Regional Security Architectures?", pp. 1, 12-15, and 18-19; and *Chairman's Statement, The Eight Meeting of The ASEAN Regional Forum*, Hanoi, 25 July 2001, p.5
36. *The Sunday Star*, 19 November 2006; and *The Star*, 20 November 2006
37. *The Sunday Star*, 19 November 2006
38. The pioneering work on this subject is Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations*, Chapel Hill. University of North Carolina Press, 1983. Another good treatment of the subject is John Baylis, "International and Global Security in the Post-Cold War Era", John Baylis & Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford. Oxford University Press, 2005, Third Edition, pp. 297-322
39. For a good exposition on security at various levels of analysis, see Barry Buzan, "The Concept of National Security for Developing Countries", Mohammed Ayoob and Chai-Anan Samudavanija (eds.), *Leadership Perceptions And National Security: The Southeast Asian Experience*, pp. 1-28