

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ADMM-PLUS EXPERTS' WORKING GROUP ON CYBER SECURITY

- CONCEPT PAPER -

Introduction

1. With the advent of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), cyber security has become a concern for all sectors of society to include the government, the business sector and the general public. Regrettably, cyberspace is also used to access information for unlawful gaining of assets, crimes, terrorism, warfare and espionage. Extremist groups even use cyberspace to recruit members.
2. There are also threats on cyber security which could harm a country's critical infrastructures leading to more serious problems. Energy sources, water utilities, transportation and communication systems and banking systems among others can be manipulated through cyberspace by unknown actors to inflict damages.
3. These are clear indications that cyber security impacts regional peace and stability. As such, cyber security is a common concern for regional states and the international community. Cooperation in this area is therefore essential. Thus, an ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus Experts' Working Group (EWG) on Cyber Security would serve as a platform for ADMM and its Plus partners to enhance and institutionalize cooperation on this aspect.

Purpose and Objective

4. **Purpose.** The establishment of the ADMM-Plus EWG on Cyber Security aims to promote practical and effective cooperation among the ASEAN Member States and Plus Countries to enhance capacity in protecting the region's cyberspace and addressing challenges to cyber security.
5. **Objectives.** The ADMM-Plus EWG on Cyber Security will have the following objectives:
 - 5.1 To enhance awareness on cyber security challenges and responsibilities of each nation and the international community to address such challenges;
 - 5.2 To leverage capabilities of each nation in addressing cyber security challenges;
 - 5.3 To encourage the ASEAN Member States, Plus Countries and the international community to make common efforts to protect cyberspace;

- 5.4 To develop cooperative solutions and initiatives to effectively address cyber security threats; and
- 5.5 To develop appropriate mechanisms for cooperation among the defense and military establishments of the ADMM-Plus countries and for coordination of military and civilian groups in addressing cyber security challenges.

Scope of Cooperation

- 6 In consideration that cyber security is a whole of government concern, the cooperation activities under this EWG will focus only on cyber security issues related to the defense and military sectors.
- 7 Cooperation within the ambit of the EWG may include:
 - 7.1 Convening of meetings and conferences to share experiences and information on cyber security and to enhance mutual understanding on related issues.
 - 7.2 Holding of conferences to develop policies and framework of cooperation on cyber security in accordance with international laws as well as each country's respective laws.
 - 7.3 Undertaking of exchanges of subject matter and technical experts for training and sharing of knowledge regarding the matter.
 - 7.4 Conduct of exercises and trainings that would enhance each country's capabilities to address cyber security challenges.
 - 7.5 Sharing of appropriate technologies, equipment and resources for cyber security.

Functions and Responsibilities

- 8 **Functions.** The ADMM-Plus EWG on Cyber Security will have the following functions:
 - 8.1 Implement the ADSOM-Plus and ADMM-Plus decisions, and provide policy recommendations.
 - 8.2 Discuss and suggest specific solutions, scope and areas of cooperation that would address cyber security challenges in the region, and consistent with the existing cooperation frameworks in ASEAN.
- 9 **Responsibilities.** The ADMM-Plus EWG on Cyber Security is responsible for:
 - 9.1 Discussing various initiatives that would promote cooperation on cyber security and address regional cyber security challenges;

- 9.2 Crafting a roadmap and plan of action which will be implemented upon approval;
- 9.3 Providing thorough assessment of activities of the EWG, propose necessary adjustments and additions to higher leaders for approval;
- 9.4 Working closely with Cyber Security Agencies of member countries to ensure that the roadmap, the procedures for consultation and the policy recommendations could address cyber security challenges and are in accordance with respective country's laws;
- 9.5 Ensuring that the initiatives of the EWG on Cyber Security complement other initiatives of ASEAN on this aspect; and
- 9.6 Hosting meetings and conferences, conducting exercises and trainings and preparing reports to higher leaders.

Assessment and Report

- 10 The ADMM-Plus EWG on Cyber Security will follow the decisions and directions made by the ADSOM-Plus and ADMM-Plus.
- 11 Reports and proposals of the EWG will be submitted to higher leaders for approval in the following order: ADSOM-Plus WG, ADSOM-Plus and ADMM-Plus.

Conclusion

- 12 With the continuing development of ICTs, the establishment of the EWG on Cyber Security would serve as an essential platform to protect the region's cyberspace and promote cooperation on cyber security.