

2019 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ASEAN OUR EYES

Adopted in Bangkok, Thailand on 11 July 2019

A. INTRODUCTION

1. As globalisation emerged, violent extremism, radicalization, and terrorism, have increasingly become a challenge. Concerns are further exacerbated by the shifting nexus of the self-declared Daesh's operations from the Middle East toward other regions to include Southeast Asia after perpetrating attacks in Europe and other countries in the region over the recent years. The case of Marawi indicates that there are attempts by local groups to affiliate themselves with the self-declared Daesh by trying to establish Southeast Asia as the new area of operations.
2. The ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism and the 2001 ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism are the standing mechanism on regional security cooperation and have been the basis for early cooperation among the ASEAN Member States (AMS) to counter terrorism in the region.
3. Given the gaps in the realm of strategic information exchange, the challenges of terrorism demand greater synchronisation and cooperation among the AMS.
4. In light of terrorism-related incidents in the region and the complexity of the security environment in Southeast Asia, there is an increasing need for the AMS to develop different ways to counter violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism.
5. In order to monitor the movement of foreign terrorist fighters, violent extremist, radicals and the crime-terror nexus, it is therefore imperative that the AMS continue to strengthen existing systems and mechanisms to ensure greater cooperation.
6. The initiative for an online intelligence sharing platform has been discussed, among others within the ASEAN military intelligence circle through the 'ASEAN 365 Information Sharing Platform. It is imperative that continuity and implementation of such an effort have to be executed in the face of mounting security challenges in the region, especially those that are rooted from violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism.
7. During the 12th ADMM on 19th October 2018 in Singapore, the Ministers have agreed to adopt the Our Eyes initiative as a platform for strategic information exchange among the AMS reflecting the collaboration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on violent extremism, radicalisation, terrorism and other non-traditional threats in the region in reiteration of the 2017 Joint Statement of the Special ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Radicalisation and Terrorism and the 2018 Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Countering Terrorism in ASEAN.

B. PURPOSE

8. The Terms of Reference (ToR) describes the Scope and Objective, Mechanism, Security Protocols, Principles, and other provisions governing the ASEAN Our Eyes (AOE) Strategic Information Exchange System.

9. The ToR describes and governs the platform for strategic information exchange for the AOE in the field of violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism

C. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE

10. In general, the AOE aims to anticipate any possible threat posed by violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism through timely strategic information exchange amongst AMS.

D. DEFINITION

11. Strategic information is an analysed data collected by the authorized officials of the respective AMS, including domestic and international information/ intelligence sources that may include military and other relevant agencies to the respective AMS.
12. The Exchange supports the respective Ministers' decision making process related to violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism through accurate estimation or prediction of a situation.

E. MECHANISM

The mechanism of AOE is as follows:

13. The strategic information exchange may capitalize existing secured platform, including ADI, and any other relevant platforms.

F. PRINCIPLES

14. The AOE shall be based on mutually beneficial information exchanges amongst AMS with regard to the risks and threats posed by violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism facing the AMS.
15. The AOE shall respect cultural values sensitivities in order to maintain cordial cooperation.

G. REVIEW MECHANISM

16. As a living document, the ToR is subject to further review as deemed necessary and based upon consensus from all AMS.

H. REPORTING MECHANISM

17. The outcome of the AOE shall be duly reported to and endorsed by the ADMM through the assessment of the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Working Group (ADSOM WG) and ADSOM.

I. ADOPTION

18. This ToR shall be subjected to ADSOM WG for consideration and submitted to ADSOM for endorsement and subsequently to ADMM for adoption.

J. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

19. The AMS agrees to establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the operationalization of the AOE within twelve months from the adoption of the ToR.
20. The AMS agrees to establish security protocols to ensure information, communication, and infrastructure that will be used for the AOE.
21. In the absence of AOE SOP and in matter of expediency to address urgent situation exchange of intelligence information sharing shall utilize existing / established mechanism between AMS.