Appendix 1

Position Paper of China at the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly

11 August 2004

Since the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly, the international situation has continued to undergo profound and complicated changes. Peace and development remain the themes of the times. Maintaining world peace and promoting common development is the shared aspiration of peoples across the world. In the meantime, however, there are increasing uncertainties affecting peace and development. Ethnic and religious problems and local conflicts sparked by boundary and territorial disputes crop up from time to time. The North-South gap is still widening. Raging terrorism, rampant transnational crimes, the spread of disease, environmental pollution and other non-traditional security factors are threatening human development in a wide range of areas. In this context, the authority and role of the UN need to be secured and enhanced.

Against this backdrop, the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly is of great significance. This Session is, in the main, aimed at strengthening the role of the UN, building consensus on multilateralism, promoting democratization and the rule of law in international relations, and further implementing the Millennium Declaration. China hopes that at this Session, UN member states will have in-depth discussions on major and pressing issues that bear on world peace and development, so as to reach broad consensus and take coordinated actions.

I. The United Nations

1. Multilateralism and Role of the UN

Multilateralism is an effective way to meet mankind's common challenges, an important means to settle international disputes, a strong guarantee for sound globalization, and the best avenue to push for democracy and the rule of law in international relations. To put multilateralism on a more effective footing, it is essential to cultivate a global partnership based on equality, mutual trust and cooperation under the guidance of a new security and development concept.

Being the most universal, representative and authoritative intergovernmental organization and the best platform for the practice of multilateralism, the UN has an indispensable role to play in this regard. It is the appeal of the world at large that the UN should be given a stronger role, its authority safeguarded and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter adhered to. China, as always, unswervingly supports the UN's central role in international affairs.
2. UN Reforms

China supports the UN to keep abreast of the times and have necessary and reasonable reforms. The purpose of the UN reforms is to enhance the role of the UN and its capacity to meet new threats and challenges. The principle of the reforms should follow the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. And the approach of the reforms is to build broad consensus on the basis of full consultations in a democratic and transparent manner.

Peace and development are mutually reinforcing. The key to the UN reforms is to achieve progress on development issues. In the reforms, the reasonable concerns and legitimate rights and interests of the developing countries should be fully accommodated, the developing countries should be given a bigger say on UN matters, and more input should be made by the UN in development.

China supports the Security Council to conduct necessary and reasonable reforms. First and foremost the reform needs to redress the current imbalanced composition of the Security Council by following the principle of equitable geographical distribution and increasing representation of the developing countries as a priority. China is in favor of taking further measures to improve the working methods of the Security Council, so as to make it more efficient and transparent.

China supports the work of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change initiated by Secretary General Kofi Annan. And China looks forward to strategic analyses and recommendations from the Panel on how to tackle major world threats of the day, which will be discussed by all member states.

3. UN Peacekeeping Operations

Peacekeeping operations are among the core means of the UN Security Council in fulfilling its duty of maintaining international peace and security. Intensified effort in this respect can help enhance the authority of the UN, give full play to the mechanism of collective security and push forward multilateralism.

China hopes that, with a view to maintaining regional and global peace and stability, all member states will provide political, funding, human and equipment support to the UN peacekeeping operations in a timely and sufficient manner, so as to create necessary conditions for the success of all peacekeeping missions.

In the new circumstances, the UN peacekeeping operations need further reforms and clearly defined and pragmatic strategies. It is important to give full play to the UN Security Council Working Group of the whole on Peacekeeping Operations, increase communication and coordination between and among the Security Council, the UN Secretariat and all the member states, and facilitate cooperation between the UN and regional organizations. The international community should also assist Africa in enhancing its peacekeeping capabilities.
4. UN Financial Issues

In the spirit of the UN Charter and under the principle of capacity to pay set by the General Assembly resolution, all member states should conscientiously fulfill their financial obligations by paying their assessed contributions for both regular budgets and peacekeeping on time, in full and without conditions, so as to ensure a solid and stable financial basis for the UN.

In utilizing UN resources, it is important to follow the principle of integrating resources with programs, and use resources more efficiently while fully considering and accommodating the reasonable concerns and requests of the developing countries. Member states should step up coordination and communication, work more efficiently and give more guidance to the Secretariat in program coordination and fiscal budgeting.

II. The Development Issue

1. Economic Globalization

China believes that to move economic globalization forward in the right direction of balanced and stable development and secure a win-win result for all, the international community should make efforts in the following areas:

- To carry out effective global management of economic globalization by reforming and improving the international financial system, increasing the openness and fairness of the multilateral trading system, and enhancing the UN's overall planning and coordinating capability in the field of development to ensure equal participation for all countries, the developing ones in particular, in the decision-making on world economic issues;
- To further strengthen coordination and consultation and explore concrete measures and mechanisms to implement the Millennium Summit's consensus on development cooperation;
- To urge the developed countries to discharge their due obligations and duties, further open their markets, remove trade barriers and earnestly fulfill their commitments of increasing financial aid and technical assistance debt relief, etc.;

2. Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The MDGs are the first set of comprehensive quantitative development goals the international community has ever put forward. Helping all countries, the developing ones in particular, meet these goals is an important mission of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. To that end, it is important for the international community to:

- Take concrete actions to mobilize fund to promote sustained and steady growth in development aid and meet the goal that the developed countries' official development assistance accounts for 0.7% of their GNP;
• Facilitate the sound development of international trade. The United Nations needs to help the new round of multilateral trade negotiations stay focused on development issues and make it a real "development round";
• Step up international cooperation on sustainable development. The existing mechanisms should be fully utilized to implement the consensus and goals of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD);
• Strengthen capacity-building in the developing countries. The international community should give substantive support to the developing countries in light of their respective needs in such fields as institutional building, personnel training and competitiveness development;
• Establish a fair and rational framework to evaluate the progress made towards the MDGs that not only assesses respective domestic progress but also monitors and evaluates the fulfillment of development assistance commitments;

Establish a global partnership. Governments, international organizations, private sectors and civil society shall work in close cooperation to meet the MDGs. In this connection, the UN needs to play a leading and coordinating role.

III. Counter-terrorism

China supports the fight against all forms of terrorism. The UN Security Council should play a leading role in the international fight against terrorism. To serve the interests of regional as well as world peace and security in the long run, it should draw up a long-term and comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy in line with the UN Charter and the norms of international law. China supports a bigger role of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council.

Poverty, backwardness, social injustice, extremist thoughts, conflicts and wars are all breeding ground of terrorism. To combat terrorism, strenuous efforts must be made to wipe out its root causes. China welcomes dialogue between different civilizations and opposes the linkage of terrorism to a specific country, ethnic group or religion as well as the adoption of double standards on this issue.

China is also a victim of terrorism. The fight against the "Eastern Turkistan" terrorists is an important component of the world campaign against terrorism. The Chinese Government cherishes the life of each and every Chinese compatriot and will never tolerate any terrorist threat to the safety of its citizens.

China endorses and has taken an active part in the formulation of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and hopes that all parties concerned will continue consultations on the remaining questions of the two Conventions in a constructive and cooperative manner and adopt them as soon as possible.

IV. Regional Issues

1. Iraq

It is the position of China that the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Iraq be safeguarded, the wish and choice of the Iraqi people respected, the restoration of Iraq's sovereignty and Iraqi people running Iraq truly realized, and a
broadly representative Iraqi government established through fair and democratic elections.

China believes the important role of the United Nations on the Iraqi issue should be brought into full play, the views of Iraq's neighbors and other Arab states should be noted and heeded, and extensive participation of the international community should be encouraged in an endeavor to help Iraq stabilize its situation and embark on the path towards peace, stability and development at an early date.

2. Middle East

China welcomes the recent peace-making efforts by the international community to break the impasse in the Israel-Palestine peace talks.

The relevant UN resolutions and the principle of "land for peace" are an important basis and guiding principles for a political settlement of the Middle East issue. Accepted by the parties concerned and endorsed by the UN Security Council, the Middle East "roadmap" for peace is now a practical plan to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflicts and needs to be further promoted.

The implementation of any solution plan on this issue must be based on adequate dialogue and consultation between the parties concerned. The efforts of the international community should show full respect for the cultural background, religious traditions and social customs of the Middle East region and conduce to maintaining and promoting peace and development in the region.

3. Afghanistan

The forthcoming general election in Afghanistan will be a key step towards peace and reconstruction of the country. The world community should continue to pay attention to the Afghan issue, help the country overcome such difficulties as instability in its security situation, facilitate a smooth general election, and deliver the promised aid as soon as possible to promote its economic development. China supports the United Nations' continued leading role on the Afghan issue.

4. African Conflicts

Conflicts and wars have seriously impeded economic development and social progress in Africa. It is the common responsibility and obligation of the international community to help African countries realize national reconciliation, resolve regional conflicts and embark on a road to rejuvenation.

The international community should pay more attention to African conflicts. The United Nations needs to play an even bigger role in assisting African states in preventing, mediating and settling conflicts, peacekeeping, providing humanitarian aid and post-war reconstruction.

The fundamental solution to African conflicts is development. It is imperative for the international community to step up its efforts in debt relief for Africa, and in helping the continent reduce poverty and control diseases in support of the economic and social development in African countries.

China supports the African Union and other regional organizations in their efforts to resolve conflicts and maintain peace and stability in Africa.
5. Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

China stands for complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and firmly opposes the proliferation of WMDs and their means of delivery. China believes that to properly address non-proliferation issues at their roots would require concerted efforts of the international community. First and foremost, a sound international and regional security environment needs to be put in place so as to remove the root cause for the proliferation of WMDs. Second, international cooperation must be strengthened and political and diplomatic means should be pursued in dealing with non-proliferation issues. Third, all members of the international community should have a role to play so as to ensure that international efforts in this regard are impartial, rational and non-discriminatory. Fourth, the relationship between non-proliferation and international cooperation on the peaceful use of relevant high technologies should be properly handled so as to ensure the right of all countries to the peaceful use of these technologies.

China supports the due role of the UN in non-proliferation and hopes Security Council Resolution 1540 will be effectively implemented. China is active in international non-proliferation cooperation, accedes to all international treaties on non-proliferation and vigorously develops its relations with relevant multilateral export control mechanisms. Furthermore, it conscientiously honors relevant international obligations and commitments and continues to strengthen its non-proliferation legal system.

China has all along exercised a high degree of restraint in the development of nuclear weapons. It has never taken part in any arms race, nor will it do so in the future.

China has always endorsed the conclusion of international legal instruments on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, and has maintained that all countries seriously implement nuclear weapon reduction treaties already reached in a verifiable and irreversible way. Security should be shared by all countries so as to create a positive and favorable international security environment for possible progress in nuclear disarmament.

The Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) conduces to preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and to the nuclear disarmament process. It represents a crucial step towards the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. China supports the CTBT and works vigorously to help it take effect at an early date.

China supports the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in its efforts to agree on a comprehensive and balanced program of work as soon as possible so that negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) and substantive work on other agenda and items may start at an early date.

China believes that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation mechanism and its role is irreplaceable. Under the current international non-proliferation situation, continued efforts should be made to safeguard and strengthen the universality and authority of the NPT, and the NPT review mechanism should be used to enable the treaty to play its role more effectively in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, promoting nuclear disarmament and facilitating the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

China supports the purposes and objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention and has been fulfilling its obligations under the Convention in a serious
and strict manner. China calls upon those countries that have not signed or ratified the Convention to do so as soon as possible. The States Parties that possess chemical weapons and those that abandoned such weapons on the territories of other State Parties shall make further efforts to speed up the destruction process.

China supports the purposes and objectives of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and has been implementing its obligations under the Convention in a comprehensive and strict manner. China is willing to continue to make positive contributions to strengthen the effectiveness of the Convention within the multilateral framework.

China maintains that the various questions related to missiles should be properly settled within the framework of the UN in an all-round, balanced, non-discriminatory, orderly and gradual manner, with the premise that security for all countries should not be compromised, the positions and concerns of various parties be fully reflected, and comprehensive consideration be given to global strategic stability and regional security situation.

China stands for peaceful use of the outer space and opposes arms race in or the introduction of weapons into the outer space. China appeals to the international community to attach great importance to the current developments of weaponization of the outer space, and to take vigorous and effective preventive measures including negotiating relevant international legal instruments to avoid possible trouble.

China will continue to support, participate in and promote progress in the work of Group of Governmental Experts of the State Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). After ratifying the Amendment Article I of the Convention, China is now making active preparations to ratify the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War.

China understands and attaches importance to the humanitarian concerns of the international community over indiscriminate injuries to innocent civilians caused by landmines. It has always supported and taken an active part in international efforts to solve the problem. As a State Party to the amended Landmine Protocol to the CCW, China has strictly honored its commitments and vigorously participated in international de-mining assistance.

China supports the UN's leading role in combating illicit trade in small arms. It attaches importance to and conscientiously implements the Program of Action adopted at the United Nations' Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects held in 2001. China also supports negotiating and concluding an international instrument concerning the identification and tracking of illicit small arms while taking a constructive approach to participate in relevant negotiations currently underway.

China attaches importance to the Firearms Protocol supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. Active preparation for the implementation of the Protocol is under way. China is ready to work with other countries to see an early entry into force of the Firearms Protocol.

China supports the UN's role on the question of information security and will actively participate in the work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Information Safety. China maintains that the Group of Experts conduct in-depth study on issues of major and immediate significance in the field of information security to the shared interest of all countries so as to build consensus and come up with specific recommendations.
VI. Social Problems

1. Human Rights

Every country in the world has the obligation to promote and protect human rights in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international human rights instruments in light of the country's actual conditions. The international community should respect the fact that human rights cannot be separated from one another, redress the tendency of putting much emphasis on civil and political rights while making light of economic, social and cultural rights, and work towards a balanced development of both types of human rights while giving full attention to the right to development.

China calls for international cooperation on human rights. The international community should recognize different views about human rights that derive from the political, economic and cultural differences of each country. Countries should go for common development by increasing exchanges and mutual understanding and learning from each other on the basis of equality and mutual respect. China is opposed to double standards on human rights or making human rights a political issue.

China supports the UN in reforming the human rights mechanism in a prudent and proper way on the basis of heeding the views of various parties. Such reform should help reduce confrontation on human rights issues, promote relevant international cooperation and increase the efficiency of the human rights mechanism.

2. Women

It is the consensus of the international community to enhance women's status, safeguard their rights and interests and realize gender equality. The women issue is not an isolated one and should be incorporated into the global strategic framework for peace and development.

The Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the UN General Assembly special session on women in 2000 contributed significantly to the cause for women throughout the world. Countries should implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the documents of the special session on women and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) so as to move the global cause for women forward.

Development is a crucial means to achieve gender equality. The international community should enhance their cooperation on women issues. The developed countries, in particular, should help women in the developing ones to develop themselves more rapidly.

3. Persons with Disabilities

The rights and interests of the disabled should be protected, their value be respected and potentials be utilized. This is a major indicator of a civilized and progressing society. The disabled are entitled to equal rights and their rights should be realized through development.

China supports the UN in developing a convention on the rights of persons with disabilities at an early date and also takes an active part in the Ad Hoc Committee. China stands ready to have exchanges and cooperation with the rest of the
international community for the early completion and entry into force of such a convention so as to contribute to the cause for the disabled throughout the world.

China attaches great importance to the cause for the disabled. It has promulgated the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons in addition to other related laws and regulations and has integrated the development program for disabled persons into its overall national development plan.

4. Public Health Security

The transnational nature and potential harm of public health security issue, which could pose a non-traditional security threat, are becoming more pronounced in the context of rapid economic globalization.

The international community should increase their cooperation in response to public health threats on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit. Countries, the developing ones in particular, need to enhance their capacity building in public health and establish a sound global public health security response mechanism. The developed countries have the obligation to provide the developing ones with technology and financial assistance so as to help them strengthen capacity building in this regard.

China maintains the international community takes follow-up actions and implements the resolutions on public health capacity building adopted respectively at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly and the 60th Session of UN ESCAP.
Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

15 June 2001, Shanghai

The heads of State of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan,

Attaching great value to the positive role of the Shanghai Five over the five years of its existence in promoting and intensifying relations of good-neighbourliness, mutual trust and friendship among the member States, strengthening peace and stability in the region and facilitating joint development,

Unanimously believing that the establishment and development of the Shanghai Five was in keeping with the needs of mankind and the historic trend towards peace and development in the conditions which prevailed after the end of the cold war and opened out enormous potential for good-neighbourliness, unity and cooperation through mutual respect and mutual trust among States belonging to different civilizations and having different cultural traditions,

Particularly noting that the agreements on confidence-building in the military field and on the mutual reduction of armed forces in the border area signed in Shanghai and Moscow in 1996 and 1997 respectively by the heads of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan, and also the final documents signed during the meetings at Alma Ata (1998), Bishkek (1999) and Dushanbe (2000), made an important contribution to the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region and throughout the world, significantly enriched the practice of modern diplomacy and regional cooperation and had a broad and positive influence on the international community,

Being firmly convinced that in the context of the dynamic development of the processes of political multipolarity and of globalization in the economic and information spheres in the twenty-first century, the progression of the Shanghai Five mechanism to a higher level of cooperation will help in making more effective joint use of the possibilities which are opening out and in withstanding new challenges and threats,

Solemnly declare the following:

1. The People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan hereby establish the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

2. The goals of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are: to strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good-neighbourliness between the member States; to encourage effective cooperation between them in the political, trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural, educational, energy, transport, environmental and
other spheres; and to undertake joint efforts for the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region, and the building of a new, democratic, just and rational international political and economic order.

3. Within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, annual official meetings of the heads of State and regular meetings of the heads of Government of the member States shall be held alternately in each of the member States. In order to expand and intensify cooperation in all spheres, new mechanisms may be established, as necessary, in addition to the existing mechanisms for meetings of the heads of the relevant departments, and also permanent and temporary expert working groups may be convened to study plans and proposals on the further development of cooperation.

4. The "Shanghai spirit" formed in the process of the development of the Shanghai Five, characterized by mutual trust, mutual advantage, equality, joint consultations, respect for cultural diversity and the desire for joint development, is an invaluable asset gained by the countries of the region over the years of cooperation. It will grow, and in the new century will become the norm in relations among the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

5. The States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization firmly adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, equal rights and mutual advantage, resolution of all issues through joint consultations, non-interference in internal affairs, non-use or threat of use of military force, and renunciation of unilateral military advantage in contiguous areas.

6. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has been established on the basis of the agreements on confidence-building in the military field and on the mutual reduction of armed forces in the border area signed in Shanghai and Moscow in 1996 and 1997 respectively. Cooperation within its framework is already under way in political, trade and economic, cultural, scientific and technical and other spheres. The principles embodied in the aforementioned agreements define the basis for relations between the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

7. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is not an alliance directed against other States and regions and it adheres to the principle of openness. It declares its willingness to develop dialogue, contacts and cooperation of all kinds with other States and appropriate international and regional organizations and, on the basis of consensus, to admit as new members States which share the objectives and goals of cooperation within the framework of the organization and the principles set forth in paragraph 6 and also other provisions of this Declaration and whose admission may help achieve that cooperation.

8. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization attaches priority to regional security and shall make all necessary efforts to maintain it. The member States shall engage in close cooperation with a view to the implementation of the Shanghai Convention on combating terrorism, separatism and extremism, including the establishment of a regional anti-terrorist structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with headquarters in Bishkek. In addition, appropriate multilateral documents shall be drawn up on cooperation in curbing illicit trafficking in arms and narcotic drugs, illegal migration and other types of criminal activity.
9. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has enormous potential and broad possibilities for mutually advantageous cooperation of the member States in the trade and economic sphere and shall make efforts to promote the further development and diversification of cooperation among member States at the bilateral and multilateral levels. To this end, within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a negotiating process shall be undertaken on the establishment of favourable conditions for trade and investments, a long-term programme of multilateral trade and economic cooperation shall be drawn up, and also the relevant documents shall be signed.

10. The States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization shall strengthen the consultation mechanism and coordinate action on regional issues and international problems, provide mutual support and develop close cooperation on major international and regional issues, and jointly facilitate the consolidation of peace and stability in the region and throughout the world, believing that the preservation of global strategic balance and stability in the current international situation is of particular importance.

11. In order to coordinate cooperation and organize interaction between the competent ministries and departments of the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a council of national coordinators of the member States of this organization is hereby established.

The activities of this council shall be determined by the provisional statute approved by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member States.

The council of national coordinators shall be instructed, on the basis of this Declaration and the documents adopted earlier by the heads of State in the framework of the Shanghai Five, to formulate a draft Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which shall contain a clear set of provisions on the goals, object, objectives and directions of future cooperation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the principles and procedure for the admission of new members, the legal force of the decisions adopted by it and means of cooperation with other international organizations, and shall submit it for signature during the meeting of heads of State in 2002.

In analysing the experience of the past and assessing future prospects, the heads of the member States firmly believe that the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization marks the beginning of a new stage in the development of cooperation among the member States and is in keeping with the trends of the modern era, the realities of this region, and the fundamental interests of the peoples of all the member States.
Appendix III

The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper*

Introduction

1. The Asia-Pacific region is experiencing an unprecedented period of peace and prosperity. For the first time in a century or more, the guns are virtually silent. There is a growing trend among the states in the region to enhance dialogue on political and security cooperation. The Asia-Pacific is also the most dynamic region of the world in terms of economic growth. The centre of the world’s economic gravity is shifting into the region. The main challenge of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is to sustain and enhance this peace and prosperity.

2. This is not an easy challenge. The region has experienced some of the most disastrous wars of the twentieth century. It is also a remarkably diverse region where big and small countries co-exist. They differ significantly in levels of development. There are cultural, ethnic, religious and historical differences to overcome. Habits of cooperation are not deep-seated in some parts of the region.

3. ASEAN has a pivotal role to play in the ARF. It has a demonstrable record of enhancing regional cooperation in the most diverse sub-region of the Asia-Pacific. It has also fostered habits of cooperation and provided the catalyst for encouraging regional cooperation in the wider Asia-Pacific region. The annual ASEAN Ministerial Meetings have contributed significantly to the positive regional environment today. There would be great hope for the Asia-Pacific if the whole region could emulate ASEAN’s record of enhancing the peace and prosperity of its participants.

4. Although ASEAN has undertaken the obligation to be the primary driving force of the ARF, a successful ARF requires the active participation and cooperation of all participants. ASEAN must always be sensitive to and take into account the interests and concerns of all ARF participants.

The Challenges

5. To successfully preserve and enhance the peace and prosperity of the region, the ARF must dispassionately analyse the key challenges facing the region. Firstly, it should acknowledge that periods of rapid economic growth are often accompanied by significant shifts in power relations. This can lead to conflict. The ARF will have to carefully manage these transitions to preserve the peace. Secondly, the region is remarkably diverse. The ARF should recognise and accept the different approaches to peace and security and try to forge a consensual approach to security issues. Thirdly, the region has a residue unresolved territorial and other differences. Any one of these could spark conflagration that could undermine the peace and prosperity of the region. Over time, the ARF will have to gradually defuse these potential problems.
6. It would be unwise for a young and fragile process like the ARF to tackle all these challenges simultaneously. A gradual evolutionary approach is required. This evolution can take place in three stages:

**Stage I: Promotion of Confidence-Building Measures**

**Stage II: Development of Preventive Diplomacy Mechanisms**

**Stage III: Development of Conflict-Resolution Mechanisms**

7. The participants of the first ARF Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok in July 1994 agreed on "the need to develop a more predictable and constructive pattern of relations for the Asia-Pacific region". In its initial phase, the ARF should therefore concentrate on enhancing, the trust and confidence amongst participants and thereby foster a regional environment conducive to maintaining the peace and prosperity of the region.

**Stage I: Promotion of Confidence-Building Measures**

8. In promoting confidence-building measures, the ARF may adopt two complementary approaches. The first approach derives from ASEAN's experience, which provides a valuable and proven guide for the ARF. ASEAN has succeeded in reducing, tensions among, its member states, promoting region cooperation and creating a regional climate conducive to peace and prosperity without the implementation of explicit confidence-building measures, achieving conditions approximating those envisaged in the Declaration of Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN). The concepts of ZOPFAN and its essential component, the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), are significantly contributing to regional peace and stability. ASEAN's well established practices of consultation and consensus (musyawarah and mufakat) have been significantly enhanced by the regular exchanges of high-level visits among ASEAN countries. This pattern of regular visits has effectively developed into a preventive diplomacy channel. In the Asian context, there is some merit to the ASEAN approach. It emphasises the need to develop trust and confidence among neighbouring states.

9. The principles of good neighbourliness, which are elaborated in the concept of ZOPFAN, are enshrined in the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC). One simple concrete way of expanding the ASEAN experience is to encourage the ARF participants to associate themselves with the TAC. It is significant that the first ARF meeting in Bangkok agreed to "endorse the purposes and principles of ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia as a code of conduct governing relations between states and a unique diplomatic instrument for regional confidence-building, preventive diplomacy, and political and security cooperation."

10. The second approach is the implementation of concrete confidence-building measures. The first ARF meeting, in Bangkok entrusted the next Chairman of the ARF, Brunei Darussalam, to study all the ideas presented by ARF participants and to also study other relevant internationally recognised norms, principles and practices. After extensive consultations, the ASEAN countries have prepared two lists of confidence-building measures. The first list (Annex A) spells out measures which
can be explored and implemented by ARF participants in the immediate future. The second list (Annex B) is an indicative list of other proposals which can be explored over the medium and long-term by ARF participants and also considered in the immediate future by the Track Two process. These lists include possible preventive diplomacy and other measures.

11. Given the delicate nature of many of the subjects being considered by the ARF, there is merit in moving, the ARF process along two tracks. Track One activities will be carried out by governments. Track Two activities will be carried out by strategic institutes and non-government organisations in the region, such as ASEAN-ISIS and CSCAP. To be meaningful and relevant, the Track Two activities may focus, as much as possible, on the current concerns of the ARF. The synergy between the two tracks would contribute greatly to confidence-building measures in the region. Over time, these Track Two activities should result in the creation of a sense of community among participants of those activities.

Moving Beyond Stage 1

12. There remains a residue of unresolved territorial and other disputes that could be sources of tension or conflict. If the ARF is to become, over time, a meaningful vehicle to enhance the peace and prosperity of the region, it will have to demonstrate that it is a relevant instrument to be used in the event that a crisis or problem emerges. The ARF meeting in Bangkok demonstrated this by taking a stand on the Korean issue at the very first meeting. This was a signal that the ARF is ready to address any challenge to the peace and security of the region.

13. Over time, the ARF must develop its own mechanisms to carry preventive diplomacy and conflict-resolution. In doing so, the ARF will unique challenges. There are no established roads or procedures for it to follow. Without a high degree of confidence among ARF participants, it is unlikely that they will agree to the establishment of mechanisms which are perceived to be intrusive and/or autonomous. This is a political reality the ARF should recognise. However, it would be useful in the initial phase for the Track Two process to consider and investigate a variety of preventive diplomacy and conflict-resolution mechanisms. A good start was made with the three workshops organised by International Studies Centre (Thailand) and Institute of Policy Studies (Singapore) on ASEAN-UN Cooperation for Peace and Preventive Diplomacy, and the Indonesia-sponsored series off workshops on the South China Sea.

Stage II: Development of Preventive Diplomacy

14. Preventive diplomacy would be a natural follow-up to confidence building measures. Some suggestions for preventive diplomacy measures are spelled out in Annexes A and B.

Stage III: Conflict Resolution

15. It is not envisaged that the ARF would establish mechanisms conflict resolution in the immediate future. The establishment of such mechanisms is an
eventual goal that ARF participants should pursue as they proceed to develop the ARF as a vehicle for promoting regional peace and stability.

**Organisation of ARF activities**

16. There shall be an annual ARF Ministerial Meeting, in an ASEAN capital just after the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. The host country will chair the meeting. The incoming Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee will chair all intersessional Track One activities of the ARF.

17. The ARF shall be apprised of all Track Two activities through the current Chairman of the Track One activities, who will be the main link between Track One and Track Two activities.

18. In the initial phase of the ARF no institutionalisation is expected. Nor should a Secretariat be established in the near future. ASEAN shall be the repository of all ARF documents and information and provide the necessary support to sustain ARF activities.

19. The participants of the ARF comprise the ASEAN member states, the observers, and consultative and dialogue partners of ASEAN. Applications to participate in the ARF shall be submitted to the Chairman of the ARF who will then consult the other ARF participants.

20. The rules of procedure of ARF meetings shall be based on prevailing, ASEAN norms and practices. Decisions should be made by consensus after careful and extensive consultations. No voting will take place. In accordance with prevailing ASEAN practices, the Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee shall provide the secretarial support and coordinate ARF activities.

21. The ARF should also progress at a pace comfortable to all participants. The ARF should not move "too fast for those who want to go slow and not too slow for those who want to go fast".

**Conclusion**

22. ARF participants should not assume that the success of the ARF can be taken for granted. ASEAN's experience shows that success is a result of hard work and careful adherence to the rule of consensus. ARF participants will have to work equally hard and be equally sensitive to ensure that the ARF process stays on track.

23. 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. This is a major challenge both for the ASEAN countries and other ARF participants. The UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace has recognised that "just as no two regions or situations are the same, so the design of cooperative work and its division of labour must adjust to the realities of each case with flexibility and creativity".
The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper was released in 1995. This concept paper focuses on consensus decision making and minimal institutionalisation.