



***Experts Meeting
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
12 November 2015***

Whereas:

An Experts Meeting was convened on the 12th of November 2015 in Port of Spain, by the host country of the XII CDMA – Trinidad and Tobago, comprising officials from Member States of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas (CDMA), as well as, hemispheric defense/security experts, academia and research institutions to discuss the three (3) thematic axes of the Conference; and

The Pro Tempore Secretariat for the XII CDMA recognises that the issues highlighted at the Experts Meeting are **not** binding on the CDMA Membership but notes that the following points will be considered in the further elaboration and refinement of the Thematic Axes by the Pro Tempore Secretariat.

Thematic Axis I: The Changing International Defense and Security Environment: The Evolving Role of the Military

- More work can be undertaken during the intersessionary period of the CDMA to further discussions on the work programme and the thematic agenda.
- Given the dynamics of countries in the Hemisphere, either the term “*defense*” or “*armed*” forces can be used as an alternate for the word “*military*” forces.
- The Agenda under this Thematic Axis can appear too broad and may require refining. In an effort to obtain consensus, only topics of common interest to the armed forces of Member States may be addressed (eg. Transnational Organized Crime and Humanitarian Assistance).
- Within the scope of the CDMA forum, countries address defense issues and security issues differently.

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- There is recognition that the defense and security environment has changed and may require the military to adopt new approaches and adapt to the changing environment in an effort to address these emerging issues.
- Both the defense and security environment, as well as military institutions have changed and this has had a simultaneous effect on each other. In this context, some countries have created hybrid institutions which incorporate defense and security sectors.
- Given that the evolution of defense establishments is dynamic, the concept of civil-military cooperation can be viewed in terms of this evolution.
- Greater elaboration may be made on the issue of crime and the role(s) that the military forces play to tackle this issue, either independently or in collaboration with civil authorities.
- Countries with the expertise in the areas of Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Preparedness and Response can be invited to share their experiences and assist other countries which do not possess this expertise.
- The CDMA is a forum for debate, exchange of experience and approaches with regard to security and defense. As such, any formulation of proposals or recommendations must recognise that each State acts in accordance with its legal framework. The proposals which are made should be sufficiently robust to address the challenges of the day.
- This CDMA forum should continue to support the exchange of information, as determined, and agreed. Countries are also encouraged to share experiences and best practices, within their legal and political frameworks.

Thematic Axis II: Environmental Protection and Resilience

- Environmental issues are recognised as factors which undermine the response capability of the armed forces of Member States.
- There is a need to develop recommendations on how militaries will adjust to the ‘new’ roles, as a result of climate change.
- Defense forces of CDMA Member States are encouraged to establish specialised units and build the capacity of officers to specifically address environmental matters.
- Multi-purpose teams can also be established with the primary aim of protecting the natural resources. These teams can comprise members of armed forces, government

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officials and non-governmental representatives. Eg. a team to fight forest fires. (armed forces and civil authorities)

- The issue of environmental protection and resilience can be a subject to be considered for introduction into the training curriculum for recruits. The objective of this training would be to create early awareness among military officers.
- The defense forces may begin, continue or encourage dialogue with academics, as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations on the environment and environmental protection.
- The defense forces can be utilised as a partner on climate change and environmental projects. E.g. Reforestation programmes.
- Assessment(s) may be conducted on projects that are directly related to environmental protection and which are currently being implemented by defense institutions of the Member States. This assessment may be used to assist in tangible information sharing and the facilitation of Subject Matter Exchanges (SMEs).
- An Ad-Hoc Working Group could be established and utilised as a mechanism to assist in the sharing of information and experiences.
- A paragraph may be drafted which encourages Member States to cooperate with each other in advancing the issue of Environmental Protection and Resilience.

Thematic Axis III: Hemispheric Security and Defense Cooperation Policy: A Case for Strengthened Humanitarian Emergency Assistance

- A Hemispheric Security and Defense Cooperation Policy is significant and would greatly assist the capacity and capability of the defense forces of CDMA Member States. This Cooperation Policy may examine, in the first instance Humanitarian Emergency Assistance.
- The Hemispheric Security and Defense Cooperation Policy is a Thematic Axis which Defense Ministers may consider, discuss and deliberate at the XII CDMA.
- The development and adoption of a Policy would require not only the attention of Ministers of Defense but also (in some instances) the attention of the Heads of State (President/Prime Minister).
- The national legal framework of each CDMA Member State must be considered.

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- Armed forces of Member States are encouraged to participate in joint exercises with the aim of strengthening both the operability of defense forces, and the ability to respond to disasters, as well as in other events which require humanitarian assistance.
- Joint Exercises are expected to help in the discovery of gaps in the response capability of countries.
- Search and Rescue (SAR) exercises may also be incorporated in the joint exercises, given that SAR usually involves Humanitarian Assistance.