

**KEYNOTES ADDRESS BY DATO' SERI MOHAMAD HASAN,
THE MALAYSIA MINISTER OF DEFENCE DURING THE
25TH ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM HEAD OF DEFENCE
UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES AND INSTITUTIONS
MEETING HELD IN KUALA LUMPUR FROM
1ST TO 3RD AUGUST 2023**



**EMBRACING COOPERATION AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE
FOR REGIONAL SECURITY**

SALUTATION

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, Assalamualaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,
Good Morning.

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to be invited here today as we gather here in Kuala Lumpur for the 25th ASEAN Regional Forum Head of Defence Universities, Colleges and Institutions Meeting. I would like to warmly welcome all the heads of defence universities, colleges, and institutions from the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) participating countries, as well as the observers, resource persons, and experts who have joined us here today.

BACKGROUND

Foremost, let us take a moment to reflect on the journey that has brought us together. The ARF, founded in 1994, has been a platform for fostering dialogue, building trust, and promoting peace and stability in our region. Three years later, the first ARF Meeting of the Heads of Defense Universities, Colleges, and Institutions (ARF HDUCIM) was held in Manila, Philippines, setting the stage for a series of subsequent meetings.

Over the years, the ARF HDUCIM have convened in various countries, including the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, China, Japan, Russia, India, Singapore, Vietnam,

Pakistan and indeed Malaysia is very honoured to be the host for this year. These meetings have allowed us to recognise the vital role of defence educational institutions in the ARF and have paved the way for increased cooperation and networking among the heads, senior members, and staff of our respective institutions.

OBJECTIVES

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

As we gather here for the 25th ARF HDUCIM, let us remain focused on the objectives of this meeting, which are aligned with the broader goals of the ARF. At its core, we shall ensure that this gathering continues to seek and foster cooperation, exchange information, and promote mutual understanding among defence educational institutions within our region.

I urge this meeting to ensure the attainment of the objective of ARF HDUCIM in facilitating the exchange of information on the academic orientations of our respective institutions. By sharing our experiences, challenges, and successes, we can learn from one another and improve our own processes. This exchange encompasses a range of areas, from comparative curricular structures to faculty development programs.

It is also of utmost importance that this meeting achieved the objective of enhancing our understanding of security education and research. As heads of defence universities, colleges, and institutions, there are needs and responsibilities to contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts through research and educational endeavours. By discussing and sharing insights on international security, there would be collective efforts towards a more secure and stable region.

Additionally, it is hoped that this ARF HDUCIM is able to promote greater interaction among the heads, senior members, and staff of our institutions. Building strong networks and fostering personal relationships are essential in strengthening our cooperation and trust. Through staff/faculty research exchanges, training programs, and

other initiatives, lasting connections can be forged that will benefit our institutions and the broader ARF community.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very delighted to be able to meet the diverse participants of this meeting from the ASEAN countries, the ASEAN dialogues partners and also the other countries as stipulated in the Terms of Reference of this meeting.

I understand that the heads of defence universities, colleges, and institutions from the ARF participating countries are the key participants in this meeting. Your presence and engagement here today reflect your commitment to advancing regional security and cooperation.

Also, I gather that in addition to the heads of defence universities, colleges, and institutions, this meeting has invited observers and resource persons to enrich our discussions. I am sure that the heads of other Staff and Command Colleges and related institutions, as well as selected experts, academics, and practitioners from ARF-participating countries, could bring valuable perspectives and expertise to the deliberations and discussions during the meetings.

THEME: DEFENCE EDUCATION DIPLOMACY FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND SECURITY

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

For this 25th ARF HDUCIM, I wish to draw your attention to the selected theme for the meeting. I fully concur with the theme that defence education diplomacy is important for sustainable peace and security. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) network of defence universities, institutions, and colleges has the potential to serve as a platform for cross-sharing and collaboration in defence education. By infusing peace education into our curriculum, we can contribute to the promotion of sustainable peace and security in our region and beyond.

Similarly, I am also of the same mind that there is a need to infuse education into the curriculum of professional military education as stated in the sub-theme. Peace education, with its focus on nonviolence, compassion, and conflict resolution, has become increasingly important in our pursuit of sustainable peace. However, it has yet to be widely incorporated into professional military education due to perceived conflicts with military training. The 25th ARF HDUCIM provides us with a unique opportunity to explore how peace education can be integrated into the curriculum of professional military education.

I am confident that by embracing peace education, we can complement traditional military education by instilling a commitment to preventing violence and promoting nonviolent means of conflict resolution. Thus, I invite this meeting to have fruitful discussions on the incorporation of peace education into the curriculum of professional military education, recognising its potential to foster a culture of peace within the military.

I wish to reiterate that in today's complex security landscape, military interventions are often accompanied by the need for post-conflict peacebuilding strategies. It is crucial that military education encompasses concepts such as international peace operations, humanitarian principles, civil-military relations, and peacebuilding efforts. The role of education in peacebuilding, particularly in post-conflict settings, can significantly contribute to the consolidation of peace.

Therefore, the sub-theme of the meeting on peace education in professional military education as a pathway for increasing the military's role in peacebuilding operations encourages discussions on enhancing military knowledge and expertise in peacebuilding efforts is indeed relevant. By sharing experiences, best practices, and

lessons learned, we can build the necessary knowledge and skills within the ARF community to contribute effectively to peacebuilding, both regionally and globally.

Next, I strongly believe that collaboration among defence universities, colleges, and institutions is crucial for the successful infusion and integration of peace education. Through joint research, funding initiatives, and lecturer and staff mobility programs, we can strengthen academic scholarship, share best practices, and develop a comprehensive understanding of peacebuilding.

Thus, the selected sub-theme topic on enhancing collaboration among defence universities, colleges, and institutions which emphasises sustainable cooperation, coordination, and joint efforts in implementing peace education initiatives is appropriate. It envisions joint research on peacebuilding and sustaining peace programs, partnerships for capacity building and training, and the protection of civilians. Additionally, it promotes academic and administrative staff mobility programs to facilitate knowledge exchange, skill development, and peer-ship among institutions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

Before I conclude, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the National Defence University of Malaysia for hosting and organising the 25th ASEAN Regional Forum Head of Defense Universities, Colleges, and Institutions Meeting. Your commitment, dedication, and meticulous planning have made this event possible.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the General Sir Kotelawala Defence University of Sri Lanka for serving as the co-host of this significant gathering. Your collaboration and support have further strengthened the spirit of partnership and cooperation within the ASEAN Regional Forum community.

To both institutions, your efforts in providing a conducive environment for fruitful discussions, knowledge exchange, and networking opportunities are commendable. The

success of this meeting is a testament to your commitment to advancing defence education diplomacy for sustainable peace and security.

In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants, observers, resource persons, and panellists who have travelled from various countries to be a part of this event. Your expertise, insights, and active participation will undoubtedly contribute to the meaningful discussions and outcomes of the 25th ARF HDUCIM.

Once again, I extend my sincere appreciation to the National Defence University of Malaysia and the General Sir Kotelawala Defence University of Sri Lanka for their exceptional efforts in organising and hosting this event. Your dedication and hard work have made this gathering a resounding success.

Thank you all for your presence and participation. I wish you a productive and enriching experience throughout the 25th ARF HDUCIM. Together, let us strive for defence education diplomacy that fosters sustainable peace and security in our region and beyond.

Thank you, and may this meeting yield valuable outcomes and lasting collaborations.

CONCLUSION

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

In conclusion, as we commence the 25th ARF HDUCIM, I urge each and every one of you to actively participate, engage in constructive dialogue, and seize the opportunity to deepen cooperation and knowledge exchange for regional security. The 25th ARF HDUCIM offers us a unique platform to explore the potential of defence education diplomacy for sustainable peace and security. By infusing peace education into our curriculum, increasing the role of the military in peacebuilding efforts, and enhancing collaboration among defence universities, colleges, and institutions, we can make significant contributions to regional stability and global peace.

Let us seize this opportunity to engage in fruitful discussions.

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen, with great pleasure and honour, I hereby declare the 25th ASEAN Regional Forum Head of Defense Universities, Colleges, and Institutions Meeting officially opened!

Wabillahi taufik wal hidayah, wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.
Thank you.