



# PRESS RELEASE

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## ASEAN and China Defense Ministers hold Informal Meeting

Meeting informally at the sidelines of the ADMM, the defense ministers of ASEAN and China exchanged views on regional security. While the defense ministers all acknowledged the progress on practical cooperation that has been undertaken within the ambit of the ADMM, there was a shared sense that security issues continue to pose challenges to the region's stability. These include maritime security, violent extremism and natural disasters.

Philippine Secretary of National Defense Voltaire Gazmin once more stressed that the necessity of having actions of states guided by and in accordance with international law, emphasizing that the Philippines decision to seek arbitration as regards its maritime entitlements in the South China Sea is a clear manifestation of having international law being the anchor of a state's actions. He also stressed that actions of states should be consistent with their policy pronouncements that they are for promoting regional peace and stability.

While the Philippines stressed that parties signatory to the UNCLOS are bound to abide by ruling of the arbitral tribunal, China conveyed that it will not abide by the court's decision.

Meanwhile, China's defense minister Chang Wanquang alluded to China and ASEAN having shared destiny and conveyed that China is ready and would support ASEAN's development including the central role that it plays in the regional security architecture. He proposed that practical cooperation should be pursued, suggesting the conduct of military exercises among ASEAN members and China's armed forces in the South China Sea.

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