



XII TWELFTH CONFERENCE
OF DEFENSE MINISTERS
OF THE AMERICAS

PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, OCTOBER 10-12 2016

**MINUTES OF THE XII CONFERENCE OF
DEFENSE MINISTERS OF THE AMERICAS**

I. Introduction

The Twelfth Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas (XII CDMA) was held at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago from October 10 to 12, 2016 under the chairmanship of Major General (Ret'd) the Honourable Edmund Dillon, Minister of National Security of Trinidad and Tobago. Thirty-one (31) CDMA Member States were present, fifteen (15) of which were represented by Ministers. The Conference was also attended by three (3) Observer States, one of which was at Ministerial level, and 15 Observer institutions. A list of participating Member States and Observers is included at **Appendix A**.

2. The Programme for the Conference, as attached at **Appendix B**, provided for discussions on the theme *Strengthening Defence and Security Cooperation in the Hemisphere in an Increasingly Volatile Global Environment*. The Ministerial segment of the Conference was preceded by meetings of the President of the XII CDMA and Boards of Directors of Working Committees and Working Committee Meetings. The Ministerial dialogue commenced with a formal Opening Ceremony and concluded with a Signing Ceremony of the Declaration of Port of Spain. The details of the discussions and related meeting events are summarised below.

II. Meeting of Pro Tempore Secretariat with the Board of Directors of the Working Committees

3. In preparation for the meetings of the Working Committees, the President of the XII CDMA, convened a meeting with the Boards of Directors of the three Working Committees to afford an opportunity for introductions and brief exchanges among Moderators, Rapporteurs and Co-Rapporteurs of the Working Committees. The Recording Secretaries and representatives of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) also attended the meeting. The President provided general operational guidelines for the management of the work of Working Committees given the short time frame for discussions and for the development of conclusions and recommendations. An appeal was made for recommendations to be action-oriented and expressed in language which would facilitate ease of incorporation into the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain.

III. Meetings of the Working Committees

4. Working Committee meetings for each of the three thematic axes were subsequently held in three parallel sessions over the course of the first day. Observers from amongst those approved at the Preparatory Meeting in April 2016, were invited to make brief interventions during the meetings of the Working Committees. These Observers were selected for their particular area of technical competence and the contribution they could make to Working Committee discussions. It should be noted that the invitation of these Observers to present in the respective Working Committees, did not preclude the participation of other Observers in the Working Committees. Participation in the Working Committees was on a voluntary basis, with Member States determining the extent of their involvement in these discussions. Overall,

participation was high across the respective Working Committees, with each group drafting recommendations for inclusion in the Declaration.

5. **Working Committee I:** The Board of Directors for this Working Committee comprised:

- Moderator - Colonel Nicolas Angel Narváez Retamozo (Paraguay);
- Rapporteur - Mrs. Diana Maria Torres Garces (Colombia); and
- Co-Rapporteur - Brigadier General Roberto Claudio de Rosal Ibarra (Mexico).

Discussions at this meeting were held on **Thematic Axis I – Security and Defence of the Americas in a Changing International Environment: The Evolving Role of the Armed Forces.**

Presentations were delivered by the following Observer institutions:

- William J Perry Centre for Hemispheric Defense Studies;
- Regional Centre for Strategic Security Studies;
- International Committee of the Red Cross; and
- Inter-American Defense Board.

The delegation of Brazil also responded to a request from the Pro Tempore Secretariat to do a presentation on Major Event Security in Working Committee I. The report of Working Committee I is attached at **Appendix C.**

6. **Working Committee II:** The Board of Directors for this Working Committee comprised:

- Moderator - Major General Dereck Joyce (Canada)
- Rapporteur - Mr. Shah A. Choudhury (US)
- Co-Rapporteur - Mrs. Jocelyn Greene (Antigua & Barbuda), Lic. Windsor Hernani Limarino (Bolivia) and Mr. Gonzalo Alvarez (Chile).

Discussions at this meeting were held on **Thematic Axis II- Environmental Protection and Resilience.** A presentation was delivered by the United Nations Environment Programme.

The report of Working Committee II is attached at **Appendix D.**

7. **Working Committee III:** The Board of Directors for this Working Committee comprised:

- Moderator- Major General Víctor Hugo Aguirre Serna (Mexico)
- Rapporteur- Mr. Rodolfo Gonzalez (Chile)
- Co-Rapporteur - Captain (Navy) Walter Marinho de Carvalho Sobrinho and Colonel Paulo Sergio Ribeiro (Brazil).

Discussions at this meeting were held on **Thematic Axis III- *Hemispheric Security and Defence Cooperation Policy: Beginning with Strengthened Humanitarian Emergency Assistance.***

Presentations were delivered by the following Observer institutions:

- International Committee for the Red Cross
- Inter-American Defense Board

The report of Working Committee III is attached at **Appendix E.**

IV. Meeting of President of the XII CDMA with Boards of Directors

8. Following the meetings of the Working Committees, the President convened a meeting of the Boards of Directors of the XII CDMA and those of the Working Committees to receive from the Moderators brief presentations on the conclusions and recommendations of their respective Committees which were to be presented to the Plenary on the following day. Participation in the session was also open to all delegations.

V. Opening Ceremony

9. The Opening Ceremony of the XII CDMA was held on the morning of October 11, 2016 in the Port of Spain Ballroom of the Conference Venue. Guests included Heads of Delegations and delegates, Ministers and Senior Officials of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, the Business Community and other Stakeholders. The feature address was delivered by Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. The President of the CDMA, Major General (Ret'd) the Honourable Edmund Dillon, Minister of National Security of Trinidad and Tobago brought welcome remarks. The Prime Minister focused his address on the twin concepts of cooperation and collaboration, upon which the Conference theme was based, and called on countries to explore new avenues for engagement and enhanced cooperation, given the current defence and security challenges in the hemisphere. He also reiterated the necessity for the development of a hemispheric security and defence policy, particularly one that articulates a collective response mechanism in the aftermath of a disaster in the Hemisphere. Copies of the respective statements are included at **Appendices F and G.**

VI. Plenary Sessions – Interventions of Heads of Delegation and Observers and Presentation of Working Committee Reports

10. The Opening Session of the Plenary followed the Opening Ceremony. The President of the CDMA delivered opening remarks, a copy of which is attached at **Appendix H.** The Chairman then introduced the Secretary General of the Pro Tempore Secretariat who outlined the General Programme of the meeting and introduced the Board of Directors of the Conference.

In this session, Mexico was confirmed by acclamation as the host country of the next (XIII) CDMA. In keeping with the Regulations of the CDMA, General Salvador Cienfuegos Zepeda, Secretary of National Defence of Mexico, was announced as Vice-President of the XII CDMA and was invited by the President to make his intervention, and to join the Conference Board of Directors at the head table.

11. Ministers and Heads of delegation were invited, in alphabetical order, to make their interventions. The representatives of one Observer State (Portugal), and two Observer institutions, the Organization of the American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Naval Conference(CNI¹), were also invited to make interventions to the Plenary.

12. The issues highlighted in these interventions included:

- the increasingly diverse, complex, and emerging set of threats and challenges confronting the hemisphere, many of which are transnational in nature and impact states in many and different ways. These threats include illicit trafficking, terrorism, cyber-attacks, gang violence and natural and man-made disasters;
- the evolving role of the armed forces including enhanced cooperation with civilian entities in an effort to combat the aforementioned threats;
- the specific problems and challenges of small islandand other developing states and the possibilities for the contribution of the defence sector in this regard;
- support for the progress of the peace process in Colombia;
- the importance of defence partnerships (bilateral and hemispheric);
- the continued importance of participation in Peacekeeping operations of the United Nations;
- practical offers of assistance to Haiti (in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew), which underscored the need for the development of a cooperative response mechanism in the aftermath of natural disasters, including the use of defence assets;
- the impact of climate change and the environment on defence policy and vice versa; and
- the introduction of gender perspectives into the policy dialogue on the defence sector.

13. Subsequent to these interventions, the Plenary received the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Committees, as presented by the Moderators of the respective Committees. All three reports were adopted by the Plenary. During these presentations, each Working Committee put forward recommendations for insertion into the Draft Declaration. These were subsequently incorporated into the text of the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain.

¹ The CNI's presentation in the XII CDMA marked the first occasion in the history of the Conference, where one of the Specialized Conferences of the Armed Forces was invited to make a formal intervention.

VII. Establishment of a Working Group on the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain

14. On the afternoon of October 11, 2016, conscious of the limited time available for completion of the programme of activities, the Chair of the Conference proposed to the Plenary that a Working Group on the Declaration of Port of Spain, comprising representatives of all Member States, be established. It was proposed that the Working Group meet in parallel session to the Plenary to consider the outstanding issues on the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain (Rev 2) with a view to presenting a revised version of the text to the Plenary to expedite its consideration of same.

15. The proposal was accepted and a Working Group on the Declaration of Port of Spain was established under the chairmanship of Trinidad and Tobago, in its capacity as Pro Tempore Presidency. Two extended Working Group sessions were held which allowed for consensus positions on most of the outstanding areas. This approach contributed in large part to timely finalization of the Declaration for signature.

16. It is to be noted that three delegations requested the insertion of footnotes to register their reservation to specific sections of the text, rather than requesting the deletion of entire paragraphs, or stalling the process. In this regard, Brazil, Venezuela and Nicaragua, requested the insertion of footnotes to register their respective reservations to the following paragraphs in the Declaration of Port of Spain:

Brazil – Declaratory Paragraph 18

Venezuela – Declaratory Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3

Nicaragua – Declaratory Paragraph 4

The delegation of Nicaragua subsequently requested that a paragraph outlining the nature of its reservation be appended to the Declaration of Port of Spain. These reservations are reflected in the final text of the Declaration.

VIII. Plenary Session on the CDMA Regulations

17. The meeting recalled that at the Preparatory Meeting of the XII CDMA held in April 2016, Trinidad and Tobago, in its capacity as President of the XII CDMA, had submitted a list of substantive and stylistic amendments to the Regulations for consideration by Member States. Member States had been requested to use the inter-sessional period to consider the proposals to the Regulations with a view to discussion at the XII CDMA. The President laid this document in the Plenary for the consideration of delegates. The highlighted amendments were presented by the Secretary General in a sequential manner to the Plenary and each was examined and debated, with suggestions for additional amendments arising from the discussions.

Amendments were agreed and have been incorporated into the amended CDMA Regulations attached at **Appendix I**.

18. It is to be noted that the delegation of Nicaragua expressed its reservation to the process being employed to amend the Regulations and withheld participation in these discussions. A subsequent text for inclusion as a footnote to the amended CDMA Regulations to reflect its reservation was provided, and included in the amended Regulations.

IX. Adoption of the Declaration of Port of Spain

19. The deliberation process undertaken by the Ad Hoc Working Committee on the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain facilitated an overall acceptance of the text by the delegates. During the Plenary session dedicated to the discussion of the Draft Declaration, contributions from Member States essentially related to their interest in participating in the various working groups to be established in the upcoming inter-sessional period. Intrinsic to this discussion on the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain was the issue of the Host Country of the XIV CDMA. The meeting welcomed the offer of Guatemala to host the XIV Conference in 2020 which was reflected in the text of the Declaration of Port of Spain which was approved at Plenary Session V. Ministers, Heads of Delegation and officials designated to sign participated in a signing ceremony of the Declaration of Port of Spain in the four languages of the CDMA. A signed copy of the Declaration is attached at **Appendix J**.

X. Other Conference Activities

20. On the request of the two parties, the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS) and the National Security Council, National Migration Service of the Republic of Panama were afforded an opportunity prior to the resumption of Plenary Session IV to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Information and Intelligence Sharing and to make brief remarks. The Pro Tempore Secretariat was of the view that the intent of the MOU was consistent with the cooperation and collaboration being promoted by the XII CDMA and sent a positive signal to member states.

21. During the Conference, the Latin American Security and Defense Network (RESDAL) distributed the 7th Edition of the Comparative Atlas of Defense in Latin America and the Caribbean – 2016. The Comparative Atlas is one of the main publications of RESDAL, and is customarily published to coincide with the convening of the CDMA. It is a compilation of current statistics on aspects of regional defence sectors, legislative and administrative frameworks and budgets. All Member State and Observer delegations were presented with copies of the 2016 Comparative Atlas of Defense in Latin America and the Caribbean.

XI. The Way Forward

27. In the resulting Declaration of Port of Spain, Member States committed themselves to action in a number of areas in the inter-sessional period. These commitments, as well as follow-up to the amendment of the CDMA Regulations, are summarised below:

PARA	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS
DECLARATION OF PORT OF SPAIN				
8.	Establish an Ad Hoc Working Group on Search and Rescue	2016-2018	To develop cooperation and coordination mechanisms in the field of search and rescue.	Not specified
13	Establish an Ad Hoc Working Group on the Evolving Role of the Armed Forces in Defence and Security	First half of 2017	To examine and exchange experiences on the evolving role of the Armed Forces in defence and security, the result of which will be reported to the XIII CDMA in 2018.	To be constituted by the host country of the current Conference and the host country of the XIII CDMA and any other interested Member States. Argentina has volunteered to be a member of this Working Group.
16	Establish an Ad Hoc Working Group to consider a Hemispheric Defence and Security Cooperation Policy	The first meeting will be held during the first half of 2017, and will report to the XIII CDMA in 2018	To facilitate dialogue on the development of a framework for a Hemispheric Defence and Security Cooperation Policy, commencing with Humanitarian Emergency Assistance focused on Integrated Risk Management and Prevention. This Group will analyse: the proposals put forward by Chile in respect of the possible establishment of an Inter-American System of Military Cooperation in matters of Defence for Disasters and Catastrophes; the proposal of the United Mexican States to offer training in the area of	This working group would be led by the host country of the XIII CDMA, with participation of other voluntary members and competent institutions.

PARA	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS
			Civilian Protection; the action protocols and lessons learnt during recent Humanitarian Assistance operations carried out in the Hemisphere; activities and existing agreements on the subject in various fora of the OAS; and, other existing mechanisms in the Hemisphere.	
26	Establish an Ad Hoc Working Group on the role of the defence and security forces with regard to environmental protection and climate resilience	By the second half of 2017	To share the best practices to reduce defence and security forces' impact on the climate and the environment, and to reduce the impact of climate change on the defence and security forces.	To be constituted by the host country of the current Conference and the host country of the XIII CDMA and any other interested Member States.
27	Establish an Ad Hoc Working Group to consider the integration of gender issues in defence and security policies	By the second half of 2017	To consider how to promote integrating gender issues in the development of defence and security policy in CDMA Member States.	To be constituted by the host country of the current Conference and the host country of the XIII CDMA and any other interested Member States. Panama, Brazil and Canada have volunteered to be members of this Working Group.

PARA	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS
CDMA REGULATIONS (AS AMENDED BY XII CDMA, PORT OF SPAIN, 2016)				
Art. 28	Establishment of the XIII CDMA Troika	To be determined by Chair of the XIII CDMA	To assist the Pro Tempore Secretariat with arrangements for the Conference.	Senior level officials of the countries comprising the most recent, current and future host countries.

XIII. Conclusion

28. The meeting concluded with expressions of support to Mexico as it prepared to assume chairmanship of the XIII CDMA and expression of appreciation to the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago for their hospitality and for the arrangements for the XII CDMA.

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