



PRESS RELEASE

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DND hosts Defense Working Committee Meeting with Brunei

Source: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Strategic Assessment

The Philippines Department of National Defense and Brunei Darussalam's Ministry of Defence held the 5th Joint Defense Working Committee (JDWC) meeting on November 11, 2010.

By virtue of the Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation between the Philippines and Brunei Darussalam that was signed in 2001, the JDWC was mandated to meet annually to implement, manage, and monitor defense cooperation between the two countries. Defense cooperation between the Philippines and Brunei Darussalam covers military training, joint military activities, exchange of personnel and information, and exchange of visits.

The Philippine contingent was led by RP Defense Undersecretary Pio Lorenzo Batino while Brunei Darussalam's Permanent Secretary for Defense Policy and Development Haji Awang Saifulbahri Bin Haji Awang Mansor headed the Brunei delegation.

Included in the agenda in this year's meeting was the sharing of best practices in peacekeeping operations, of which both countries are active participants. Updates on the GRP-MILF Peace Process, of which Brunei has been very supportive through its participation in the International Monitoring Team that oversees the ceasefire in Mindanao, were also presented.

The Philippine and Bruneian delegations also talked about initiatives in enhancing Cooperation among ASEAN Militaries and updates on other aspects of the Philippine-Brunei Defense Cooperation, specifically on the pursuit of a Philippine-Brunei Status of Visiting Forces Agreement (SOVFA), furtherance of Intelligence Exchange (INTELEX), and training activities and educational exchanges between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF).

In the end, the two delegations expressed their continued commitment to maintain and even strengthen the well-established defense cooperation between the Philippines and Brunei Darussalam. The Philippine delegation has even expressed its keen interest in participating in the events to which it was invited by Brunei as part of the 50th anniversary of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces.

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