

According to the Russian Defence Minister General of the Army Sergei Shoigu, it is important to hold meetings of the ASEAN Defence Ministers and ADMM-Plus for strengthening mutual trust in the Asia-Pacific region (APR).

"This is a demanded mechanism for strengthening peace, stability and mutual trust between the APR states," said Sergei Shoigu on Tuesday, welcoming the Fourth Meeting of the ASEAN Defence Ministers and the ADMM-Plus, which is taking place in the Philippines (Pampanga Province).

Shoigu expressed his confidence that "the discussion will take place in a constructive and friendly atmosphere, will allow us to bring together approaches to solving key regional problems." "I look forward to a concerned exchange of views on the current international and regional issues as well as on the main aspects of our interaction," said the Russian Defence Minister.

He noted "hearty welcome and excellent organisation of the meeting". "This is my first visit to the Republic of the Philippines. I am glad to get acquainted with this wonderful country," said Sergei Shoigu.

In the Philippines, there is a meeting of ASEAN Defence Ministers (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, of which Russia and the United States are not members), and then a meeting of the heads of military departments in the ASEAN+ format. A total of 18 countries are participants in the ASEAN+ association. The point is that about 10 ASEAN participants (Brunei, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines), as well as Australia, India, China, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia, the United States and Japan. The population of ASEAN member countries is about 500 million people, the aggregate gross domestic product reaches 737 billion US dollars.

The head of the Russian Defence Ministry arrived on an official visit to the Philippines on October 24.