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Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific

Eastern Horizons

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Life Without Drugs

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Writer/Editor: Olivia Sylvia Inciong, sylvia.inciong@unodc.org
Editorial Assistant and Circulation Manager: Ajarie Salilasiri, ajarie.salilasiri@unodc.org

For further information, contact:

UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific
3rd Floor, United Nations Building, Raj Damnern Nok Avenue,
Bangkok 10200, Thailand

Tel: (+62-2) 288-2100, Fax: (+62-2) 281-2129

Website: <http://www.unodc.un.or.th>

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Our Cover

Summer beckons. It's time for outdoor activities. Imagine living in a world where you feel happy, alert, and energetic. Life without drugs is happier, healthier and more productive. Discover the beauty of life without abusing drugs. Think smart. Don't start.

Text by Olivia Sylvia Inciong

Photo by Rawit Poonpolkul

First Choice



UNODC Photo

The UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific promotes and facilitates actions to address issues as illicit drug supply and demand reduction, HIV, transnational organized crime, human trafficking, corruption, money laundering, and terrorism, through cooperative partnerships in the region. Against this backdrop, we envision that partners - governmental, inter-governmental, non-governmental, turn to us as the first choice for advice on international norms and standards, and for requesting or providing technical assistance in such areas, pursuant to relevant international treaties.

As a visible and relevant organization in the region, we would take an issue- and results-oriented approach in providing technical assistance to address justice and security issues.

With its comparative advantages in being able to reach out to all types of partners, the Regional Centre is making every effort to have a thorough and balanced programme, for both normative and technical assistance activities in the above-mentioned areas through application of rule of law, trend analysis and forensics, and health and development programmes.

The Regional Centre is engaged in substantive expansion of programme activities, particularly on crime prevention and criminal justice system issues and will have immediate focus on human trafficking and corruption issues in selected countries. The Regional Centre will place priorities on prosecutorial assistance and other related legal and legislative matters and law enforcement issues, including assistance for actions by, and advocacy for, law enforcement sectors. On corruption issues, initial focus will be placed on, among other things, judiciary and public sector procurement, considering linkages to money laundering issues. For terrorism prevention, legislative assistance will continue to be the main means of support.

As part of an on-going strategic repositioning exercise for the region, we will strengthen our footholds in Indonesia, Philippines and Malaysia through existing planned projects in order to expand portfolio for the East Asia and the Pacific region, and pursue a geographical expansion in programme coverage to other countries, including Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, Pacific Island nations, as well as Mongolia.

In the area of drug abuse prevention and control, new challenges, such as ATS and HIV/AIDS and drugs, call for increased efforts by countries of the region and the international community. Other initiatives successfully developed over the last decade, e.g., on sustainable alternative development, precursor control, scientific and forensic capacity building, demand reduction and treatment will require continued funding.

The vision of the Regional Centre puts it into a new strategic orientation of customized specific programme activities fully taking into account donors' views and interests for technical assistance in the region. Maintaining close working contacts with both donor and recipient countries will be a key priority. The Regional Centre will continue to make every effort to keep the donors abreast of the outcomes and impact of programme areas and individual projects, including substantive and financial reporting as available to Member States, reflecting results-based programming and budgeting. Local and thematic events will be organized to expand our partnership. We will seek cooperation of traditional and non-traditional donors, including private-public partnerships, and to setting up joint initiatives with regional financial institutions.

Akira Fujino
Representative

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific
Bangkok

Clandestine Laboratory Dismantled in Cambodia

The National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD), Government of Cambodia reported the dismantling of a methamphetamine clandestine laboratory last 1 April. During the raid, the Anti-Drug Department in collaboration with the Police Commission in Kampong Speu Province confiscated large quantities of a number of substances and some small equipment housed in a cattle ranch located 81 km south west of Phnom Penh. In the raid, 17 suspects (14 Cambodians and 3 foreigners) were arrested. The lab, presumably used as a facility for possible manufacturing of illicit drugs was suspected to be set up only recently.

Test results conducted by the NACD laboratory indicated that about 30 kg of substances in buckets were chloroephedrine, an intermediate in the synthesis of methamphetamine.

To assist in the Government's efforts in follow up investigations and action, NACD requested technical assistance from UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific and the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (USDEA). NACD also requested assistance in disposing large quantities of hazardous substances.

Two project coordinators working on amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) provided the requested assistance. Three DEA chemists also responded to the Government's request.

The DEA chemists identified 624 bottles containing clear yellow liquid as thionyl chloride. Other chemicals found included chloroephedrine and traces of pseudoephedrine. DEA assisted NACD in the collection of samples for further laboratory analysis.

UNODC and DEA teams also visited a three-storey residential house in Phnom Penh suspected to be related to the cattle ranch meth clandestine lab. Several sacks of activated charcoal in 25 kg packing and sacks of either potassium or sodium hydroxide pellets were found on the ground floor. The presence of these chemicals were deemed not significant at this point as these have numerous legitimate uses. None of these two chemicals were found at the ranch.

Chloroephedrine, an intermediate substance used in the synthesis of methamphetamine hydrochloride (ice) was produced at the cattle ranch using pseudoephedrine hydrochloride and thionyl chloride. There was no evidence, however, of conversion of chloroephedrine to methamphetamine at this site.



UNODC Photos/Chan Kee Bian

The clan lab with the cattle pen in front.

DEA and UNODC considered the site hazardous to health due to the presence of toxic substances. DEA proposed a clean-up of the site and has worked on obtaining a service provider for the disposal of the substances.



View from the back of the clan lab.



Boxes of thionyl chloride



Destroying thionyl chloride

UNODC Photos/Chan Kee Bian

UNODC Cambodia Project Office and Regional Centre Expedite Action toward Safe Disposal of Chemicals at Dismantled Clan Lab and Backtracking to their Source

After the dismantling of the clandestine laboratory in Cambodia last 1 April, the UNODC Project Office in Cambodia (POCAM) and the Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific (RCEAP) accelerated steps to ensure the safe disposal of chemicals at the lab site. Also, at the initiative of the RCEAP Representative, the Cambodian Government commenced backtracking of the chemicals to their source (possibly in China) with support from RCEAP.

With the assistance of various projects of RCEAP, POCAM has taken the initiative in mobilizing regional and international support to assist the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) of Cambodia in the safe disposal of chemicals and clean up of the dismantled lab. POCAM and RCEAP through Project H44, Scientific Support to Strengthen Regulatory and Law Enforcement Control of ATS and their Precursors in East, South and South-East Asia, temporarily secured the chemicals by moving these to safer locations at the site and initiating a temporary repair of the roof covering the storage area for the thionyl chloride.

The building housing the chemicals was highly vulnerable to bad weather (rainy season). The toxic thionyl chloride was at risk of exploding when in contact with

water. Some of the glass bottles in the thionyl chloride storage area were broken; the fumes prevented people from entering the area without full protective gear including face masks and acid respirators.

In exploring technical assistance options, UNODC (POCAM, Laboratory and Scientific Section of Headquarters, and RCEAP) concluded that it was desirable to go beyond the mere disposal of chemicals and provide a more complete package, which would build capacity and enable the Cambodian Government to handle seizures of clan labs in the future.

The agreement of the Cambodian Government was obtained for this solution and a project was subsequently drawn up to this effect. ■



Burning ceremony of remaining chemicals and related wastes seized in clan lab. The clean-up was funded by the Governments of the US and Australia through UNODC Project Office Cambodia, 30 August 2007.

Japanese Singer-Songwriter Composes Advocacy Song for UNODC

Mr. Shinji Tanimura, singer-songwriter has composed and presented a campaign song entitled, “Gita” for drug abuse prevention to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) during the International Drug Abuse Prevention Convention held 7-8 June in Tokyo. The convention, with UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa as keynote speaker, was hosted by the Drug Abuse Prevention Centre (DAPC) and the Lions Club International with the support of UNODC.

At the request of Mr. Akira Fujino, Representative, UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, Mr. Tanimura composed the song as an inspiration to protect children from losing their souls to drug abuse. He hopes that the song could be passed down from Japan to the hearts of children in Asia and the rest of the world. He has agreed to allow artists from different countries in the region to sing the song in their respective languages and that part of proceeds would be given to a fund for UNODC’s public awareness and advocacy initiatives against drugs and crime.

(Olivia Sylvia Inciong) ■



Photo courtesy of DAO Co., Ltd., Japan and Drug Abuse Prevention Centre, Japan

Mr. Tanimura (right) handing over to UNODC Representative a copy of the lyrics of the song and a brief explanation of the inspiration behind “Gita”.

My Thoughts about “Gita”

By Shinji Tanimura

The world is now surely starting to make a transition from a “materialistic age” to a “spiritual age”. I can’t help but think that adults who are constrained by things such as material objects and figures are shutting children’s hearts closed. Instead of adults just preaching about “morality”, I feel that we are in an age where adults must demonstrate it first. Children, who are suffering and surrounded by adults whose spirits are shut closed in society, are our future.

What I feel now after having made songs and continued to sing them is that music has the power to open people’s hearts. Anyone can naturally open their hearts and cross national boundaries as easily as they want to when they are immersed in music and songs.

Children’s hearts are never shut when they are sung lullabies by their fathers, mothers, and parent-like figures.

When I asked myself what we can do to stop pursuing our own self-interests and think about the children who are the future of our planet earth, I felt that I should write and sing a “lullaby” that can really remind people of their fathers, mothers, etc.

And now, I have written a song called “Gita” to protect children who are losing their souls to drug abuse.

“Gita” is a word that appears in a volume of 18 chapters in the 6th book “Bhishma Book” of ancient India’s great epic “Mahabharata” and is also called “The Lord’s Song”.

I have presented a message of the importance of making a transition from material objects to the soul in this song.

Nothing would make us happier than to deliver “purity”, “cheerfulness”, and “beauty”, which are “teachings of the soul” that have been passed down to us, Japanese, from Japan to the hearts of children in Asia and the rest of the world through songs. ■

Community Mobilization and Civic Awareness in Drug Abuse Prevention Campaigns of Lao PDR

By **Dr. Kham Noan Hsam**

Programme Facilitation Unit, Lao PDR

Lao PDR used to be the world's third largest producer of illicit opium and also had the second highest rate of opiate abuse. It has a population of 6.4 million with over 40 per cent under the age of 15. The country has rugged mountainous terrains and a 5000 km land border linking it to Viet Nam, Thailand, China, Cambodia and Myanmar. Located at the hub of the Greater Mekong Sub-region, Lao PDR has become a main transit country for illicit drugs such as amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) and heroin.

In 2006, Lao PDR officially declared its success in eliminating opium to insignificant levels. The drug control priorities for the country remain keeping illicit opium production and consumption at insignificant levels while addressing the problem of increasing ATS trafficking and abuse.

In 1994, the National Drug Control Programme was established with support from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). During the United Nations General Assembly 20th Special Session, Lao PDR, along with other United Nations member states agreed to significantly eliminate drug crop production by 2008.

In 1999, the country developed the National Programme Strategy, taking a balanced approach to opium elimination. The Strategy has three main components: sustainable alternative development; drug demand reduction; and law enforcement.

In implementing all three components, civic awareness campaigns play a major role. Civic awareness initiatives for drug control targeting opium cultivation and addiction started in 2001.

ATS was relatively unknown in Lao PDR in 1996. Ten years later, reports indicated 40,000 ATS abusers in the country. Targeting mainly youth who represent the future of the country, the ATS problem has been spreading at an alarming rate from urban to rural areas. The situation is most severe along main transit trafficking routes. Parallel to this is the problem of increased crime, violence, and corruption.

Aware of the mounting serious consequences, the Lao Government has declared solving the ATS problem a national priority including reducing illicit supply, traffic and demand through a collective and coordinated national action. In 2005, the civic awareness campaign that evolved out of the opium elimination programme was adapted to address the increasing problem of ATS.

Community mobilization

The objective of the "Balanced approach to opium elimination in the National Programme Strategy was specific as to bring about a significant eradication of illicit opium production and abuse in Lao PDR by 2006. The Government enacted a strong legal framework to enforce the strategy. Annual surveys charted the trends in both opium poppy cultivation and addiction in the country.

For ATS, the timeframe however, is not yet defined. For both campaigns, the mobilization of the community through civic awareness remains a key factor.

The main focus of civic awareness campaigns is primary prevention, with the expected output of reducing drug trafficking and abuse within the community through mobilization and enhancement of the strength of the household and family.

The civic awareness campaign aims to mobilize the communities including parents, community leaders, village elders, mass organizations, local authorities, teachers, the clergy, police and local militia to plan, organize and implement community-based drug prevention programmes while enhancing the strength of the household and family through education.

Strategy

The main strategy is to mobilize communities and view illicit drugs as a threat to the security and development of the community as well as the country and to take ownership in solving the problem.

The drug abuse prevention campaign emphasizes on creating understanding of the long-term and immediate impact of drugs and drug abuse to individuals, their families and their communities and the nation. It also seeks to train communities to respond to particular situations, with the objective of promoting positive behavior, including the constructive handling of feelings and responsibilities of people of various ages.

To facilitate the strategy, a drug control structure was established from central to village levels. A situational needs assessment was undertaken. To highlight the commitment of the Government in backing the campaign, the Minister of the President's Office who is also the Chairman of the Lao National Commission of Drug Control and Supervision (LCDC), took it upon himself to lead the nationwide drug awareness campaign.

Lao public media provided widespread coverage and broadcast special TV and radio programmes against drugs. Sporting events and marches against drugs were organized across the country. Various information-education-communication (IEC) materials were developed and disseminated. Special drug awareness programmes for communities, schools and youth were organized. Village drug control units were established in certain villages, representing relevant segments of the community. These units facilitate community involvement in drug control as well as coordinate, oversee and evaluate drug control programme implementation. Village units work with the counter narcotics units (CNUs), local militias and police to keep drug dealers out of the neighborhoods and bring peace and security among the residents.

Follow up and monitoring is carried out by the local communities and local government authorities with random monitoring by the central level.

LCDC and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provided resources, technical assistance, and training.

Structural support

A Programme Facilitation Unit (PFU) was jointly established by LCDC and UNODC to be responsible for coordination, supervision and monitoring of the national programme strategy. Drug control units (DCUs) were established in relevant ministries. CNUs were established in key strategic provinces. Supplementary funding was provided by UNODC and by other bilateral sources.

Partnerships have been formed with various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious leaders and the international community including UNODC as well as the US Embassy's Narcotic Affairs Section.

Results

Overall, the Lao experience in mobilizing the community has been positive, with marked achievements in creating awareness, increasing knowledge and in mobilizing the community to address the drug problem. Illicit opium poppy cultivation has been reduced by 93 per cent since 2000 and opium abuse by over 80 per cent during the same period. ATS abuse has been reportedly contained in some provinces.

Problems and measures taken

In implementing civic awareness and community mobilization initiatives, some families refuse to accept the fact that their children have a drug problem.

The collaboration of government and NGOs and various sectors in the community, a crucial element for effective drug prevention, requires strengthening.

Human and financial resources were not sufficient.

The local government and community leaders lacked knowledge and skills of prevention strategies.

Parents' education and support requires strengthening.

UNODC is working with the Lao Government to develop a comprehensive drug law. Additional IEC materials are being developed for dissemination. More drug abuse prevention campaigns are planned across the nation. A national programme strategy for drug abuse including ATS prevention is being adapted.

Lessons learned

Community mobilization and civic awareness proved many things. Parents and families when given the necessary knowledge and skills on drug prevention and the needed support have proven to be the most influential partners and dedicated activists in mobilizing communities for drug prevention.

Strong support and reinforcement from enlightened community leaders have a positive impact in preventing drug abuse and are necessary for an effective community drug prevention programme. Peer educators who have been former drug abusers have been very influential. Regular follow-up and monitoring by concerned parties (government and international organizations) is an essential element for the success of the programme. Sufficient resources must be made available to ensure success.

Monitoring and evaluation are necessary to be conducted at the village, district, provincial and central levels.

Mobilization of the community is a must to ensure success of the drug abuse prevention campaign in Lao PDR. To do so, the community must accept the drug problem as their own and whenever possible, to solve the problem by themselves.

This best practice is most effective when there is a closely-knit community and strong leadership. ■

Safrole-rich Essential Oils - Risk of Illicit Use

Certain plant species contain essential oils that are rich in safrole, a precursor chemical used in the manufacture of the illicit drug MDMA (Ecstasy). Although the region of East and South East Asia is a major producer of essential oils rich in safrole, very little information was available.

In 2005, "Project Prism" requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to conduct a survey of safrole-rich oils in East and South East Asia to obtain more information. Project Prism, initiated by the International Narcotics Control Board, aims at assisting governments in preventing diversion of precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) including MDMA.

Due to the nature of the survey, it was conducted in collaboration with surveyors from the countries concerned and experts from the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), a leading institution in the region focusing on tropical forestry research.

Financed by The Netherlands, the survey commenced with rapid appraisals in nine countries (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Viet Nam) followed by detailed surveys in six countries (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam) in which the rapid appraisals revealed activities related to the production of safrole-rich oils and its trade. The six-month survey was completed in September 2006.

In the six countries surveyed, a total of 361 plants were found to contain essential oils rich in safrole. Most of the plants were of the *Cinnamomum* species. China has 26 species with safrole-rich oils of which six were used for oil extraction. The plants grow wild in natural forests except in China where these are also planted in a commercial scale, mainly in Sichuan and Guizhou provinces. *Cinnamomum petrophilum* was the preferred species for commercial cultivation as its leaves and branches could be harvested in a sustainable manner to extract the oils. In contrast, trees were felled in the other countries to extract the oils found mainly in the trunks and roots, thus destroying the trees and environment.

An analysis of 32 oil samples collected in the survey showed that the concentration of safrole in half the samples was 70 per cent and higher. The oil from the leaves of *C. petrophilum* in China contained 97 per cent safrole while



UNODC Photo

Digging up roots with safrole-rich essential oils in Indonesia

oil samples from Cambodia and Indonesia had as much as 96 per cent and 93 per cent safrole, respectively. With such high concentrations of safrole, the oils could virtually be considered as safrole.

In Cambodia, the plant raw materials for oil processing were obtained mainly by felling trees with safrole-rich oils in natural forests to obtain the roots and trunk. In Indonesia villagers dug up the roots and stumps of such trees that had been previously felled for timber. In all the countries surveyed, the harvesting of non-timber forest products from natural forests required permission from the governments. In both Cambodia and Viet Nam, the harvesting of plant materials for the extraction of safrole-rich oils was prohibited by law. The plant raw materials were sold by villagers to the oil processing factories or via middlemen at US\$25-35 per ton except in China where it was US\$50-110 per ton.

The method to extract essential oils was by steam distillation. Wood from the roots, trunks and other tree parts was processed into wood chips which were steamed in a still. The steam distillation process required four major components, namely a boiler to generate steam, a still, condenser and collector. The large quantities of wood from the forests that were used to fuel the boilers, contributed very significantly to the destruction of the forest and environment.

The percentage yield of oil in the steam distillation process was between 1.2 and 3.5 per cent depending on the capacity of the distillation equipment used and the part of the plant and the plant species from which the raw material

was obtained. In general, larger scale equipment gave better oil yields of above 2 per cent. The distillation plant in Palu, Indonesia, reported a high oil recovery of 2.5 to 3.5 per cent.

By extrapolating the information obtained from the survey, the annual production of safrole-rich oils in East and South East Asia was estimated to be 1360-1620 tons of which China accounted for 800 tons followed by Myanmar (230-490 tons), Cambodia (250 tons), Lao PDR (45 tons) and Indonesia (35 tons). The estimated amount would likely fluctuate widely in view of sporadic government operations in Cambodia to shut down production, varying demand for the oil in international markets and changing forest resources of safrole-rich oil trees.

The trade in safrole-rich oils is illegal in Cambodia. Trees containing the oils are considered rare species under the Forestry Law and therefore harvesting of the trees is prohibited. Illegal trade in the oil also occurred in Myanmar. In the other countries, safrole-rich oils were traded legally. Domestic trade in and use of safrole-rich oils were significant in China followed by Indonesia. China used an estimated 1500-2000 tons of the oil in 2006, mainly in the perfume processing industries while Indonesia used the oils as an ingredient in traditional medicinal oil. Domestic trade in Cambodia and Lao PDR involved small amounts of the oils for traditional medicines used by the local communities. Viet Nam was engaged in the import and export of oils only.

Smuggling of oils occurred from Cambodia to Viet Nam. Lao PDR exported the oils to both China and Viet Nam. Oils from Myanmar were mainly smuggled into China. Indonesia exported the oils to China and Japan while Viet Nam and China exported the oils worldwide. The average export price of safrole-rich oils was US\$6 per kg. China used the following HS codes for safrole-rich oils: 3301299010 (sassafras oil), 2932940000 (safrole), 2932910000 (isosafrole) and 2932930000 (piperonal), whereas both Viet Nam and Indonesia used the general HS code for essential oils (330129990). In Cambodia, Lao PDR

and Myanmar, trade in the oils did not pass through official border crossings and therefore, there were no HS codes for the oils.

Myanmar had seized about 115 tons during the period 2002-2005 while seizures in Cambodia were sporadic. There were no indications that the seized oils were intended for illicit drug manufacture.

Only China and Viet Nam have established specific regulations for the control of the production of and trade in safrole-rich oils. All the countries used forestry laws or administrative measures or both to control the harvesting of plant raw materials containing safrole-rich oils and the processing of and trade (export and import) in the oils which were considered as non-timber forest products.

A major outcome of the six-month survey was the sharp increase in awareness of government authorities with respect to the production and trade activities involving safrole-rich oils. In some cases, the survey findings were a revelation to the authorities. Consequently, the survey had generated a high level of interest in monitoring and controlling the production and trade activities.

Although these activities would likely be regulated in the near future through new legal or administrative measures, and hence reducing the risk of diversion into the black markets for illicit drug manufacture, the improved control and monitoring might result in at least a temporary decline in the availability of safrole-rich oils from the region. Nevertheless, a clearly visible observation of the survey was that the high level of sourcing of plants from natural forests for the extraction of safrole-rich oils was highly unsustainable, severely destructive of the environment and endangered the survival of the tree species.

For further information, contact Mr. Wong Hoy Yuen, Project Coordinator "Precursor Control in East Asia", E-mail: <HoyYuen.Wong@unodc.org>. ■



A cottage factory in China distilling safrole-rich essential oils



Cinnamomum balansea tree in Viet Nam

UNODC Photos

UNODC Proposes Regional Mechanism to Reduce Trafficking and Demand of Synthetic Drugs

By **Olivia Sylvia Inciong**
UNODC Regional Centre

With the signatory countries to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on drug control as the core – and involving The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) proposed for the creation of a regional drug control mechanism to reduce trafficking of synthetic drugs.

Speaking at the Meeting of Ministers of the Signatory Countries of the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control in Beijing, China in May 2007, UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa explained that a network could be established to exchange information on traffickers and trafficking routes, production trends, and scientific data.

This network could improve regional cooperation and criminal justice, and cut the trade in these dangerous substances. UNODC is currently in the process of brokering the creation of counter-narcotic intelligence-sharing centres in Central Asia and the Gulf.

To start with, the region needs information such as number of addicts and what they are addicted to. Without such information, it would be difficult to make evidence-based policy and make targeted interventions. He urged the MOU countries to carry out household surveys of drug abuse to provide a clearer picture of the current situation.

While such initiatives could take time, a number of steps can be taken immediately such as having a demand reduction strategy, tracking and responding to changing drug trends, and integrating treatment services with other health services.

“Perhaps the time is ripe for something similar in Asia, paying special attention to synthetic drugs,” Mr. Costa said.

Mr. Costa believes that to keep people away from drugs and to bring addicts back into society, there must be more awareness and leadership raised by politicians, community leaders, parents and the media. Drug control is too important to be left to drug experts and governments alone. It is a community-wide responsibility that requires community-wide engagement. It is as much a social and public health issue as a public security issue.

“To help young people make the right choices in life, it is important that they get a good start in life, and good guidance at home. I urge you to support programmes to

strengthen families, improve parenting skills, and reduce anti-social behaviour among youth,” he said.

He cited that schools can help by teaching life-skills and discussing with young people the effects of drug use while specialists can help develop social and problem-solving skills - problematic families and children with behavioural problems.

Community groups can provide young people with after-school activities like sport and the arts that enable them to spend their time in a fun, challenging and constructive way.

For those who fall through the cracks, more attention should be devoted to early detection and outreach to facilitate entry into treatment. Special attention should be paid to socially excluded or marginalized people who take drugs because of poverty, psychiatric disorders or hopelessness. Treatment must be accessible, properly sequenced, comprehensive and integrated into mainstream public health and social services.

There should also be greater intervention to prevent the spread of diseases (like HIV/AIDS and hepatitis) through drug use, and greater attention to treating all forms of addiction.

For the past two years, UNODC has been building an international network of drug dependence treatment and rehabilitation resource centres called TREATNET. It aims to identify and develop best practices, share information, and build capacity. There are 20 participating resource centres worldwide, of which three are in Asia—specifically in China, India, and Indonesia.

Mr. Costa urged countries to identify well-run drug treatment and rehabilitation centres and link them up to the TREATNET. ■



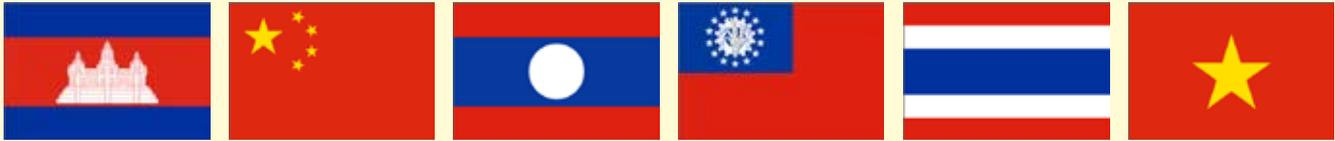
International network of drug dependence treatment and rehabilitation resource centres



www.unodc.org/treatment

Graphics by UNODC

MOU on Drug Control



The first Senior Officials Meeting of the signatory countries to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Drug Control of the Greater Mekong Sub-region held in 1993, is something which no other region in the world has done.

Achievements

The countries in the region were the first in the world to demonstrate the usefulness of regional cooperation under a MOU scheme, which has become an example to be replicated by other regions of the world. The Sub-regional Action Plan (SAP) reflects the countries' long-term commitment to cooperate in all aspects of drug control as well as to meet emerging drug control challenges.

There has been success cases in the fields of information exchange and networking, precursor chemicals control, amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) control, drug treatment and prevention, cross-border cooperation and training, sustainable alternative development, and the provision of technical and financial assistance.

Working together, countries have proved that they can put into action political will with concrete terms. Constructive operational cooperation, leading to tangible progress through joint efforts to fight illicit drug problems have been established. That still remains valid today.

Current situation and challenges

As a result of successful law enforcement and regulatory actions taken, there are indications that traffickers are relocating their clandestine ATS laboratory sites and smuggling and diversion routes. Shifting trafficking routes affect all countries, including most recently Lao PDR, Cambodia and Viet Nam, and spread of clandestine manufacture of ATS, particularly methamphetamine, has been uncovered in the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Pacific and, most recently, Cambodia. When drug trafficking patterns and routes change, abuse follows.

Other challenges include:

- expanding impact of organized crime and diversification of criminal activities across the region, i.e., money laundering is linked also to trafficking in human beings

- sustaining the reduction of opium poppy cultivation while at the same time mitigating the potential for a full blown humanitarian crisis
- establishing further comprehensive data collection and reporting systems
- spreading of HIV/AIDS through injecting drug use and in custodial settings

Other related challenges include: further strengthening national criminal justice frameworks, prison reform and juvenile justice.

The way forward

While there are clear signs that ATS abuse, especially methamphetamine, is increasing throughout South East Asia and internationally, there are few services that offer ATS-specific interventions.

In the past, within the framework of the Sub-regional Action Plan, the UNODC Regional Centre served as a catalyst and coordinator for drug control activities. Then, with the establishment of the MOU Support Project and other initiatives, all partners in the process have taken on increasing ownership of and participation in the future direction of the mechanism.

This year is the turning point.

Enhancing regional cooperation

Enhanced regional cooperation beyond the geography of the Greater Mekong Sub-region would need to be considered. Doing so further benefits the MOU partners because the subject calls for such broader collaboration. This process is already underway on a selected basis via, for instance, the Precursor Control, and the ATS Data Collection projects.

This also ties in with feedback received from countries on the need to better coordinate and synergize the various regional drug control fora. Each mechanism has its strengths and limitations. Efforts are already underway via linkages between the MOU, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Senior Officials Committee, ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD), and Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), etc., on cross border cooperation and computer-based training (CBT) and regional

law enforcement actions, including the joint action against ATS-related crimes initiative.

Thus, one of the challenges is to enhance the current mechanism by moving beyond geographic boundaries and considering ways to better link with other partners in UNODC work and to address related transnational organized crimes.

Resource mobilization

While the former mechanism was primarily based on cooperative activities by MOU member countries through projects with UNODC securing financial support, the current

situation, especially as regards funding and fundraising efforts, necessitates further partnerships by all member countries. Given the current reality of intense competition for donor attention, new strategies are required to mobilize resources.

New era

What is required is to devise a new way of doing business. This has been started by working to enhance the participation and ownership by all countries in the revision and presentation of the Sub-regional Action Plan. Further renewed efforts and commitments are required. ■

Positive Trends and an Asian Solution

More than a century ago, China had a massive opium problem. In 1909, when the International Opium Commission met for the first time in Shanghai, world opium production was estimated to be around 30,000 metric tons.

A century later, today, opium production was down to around 7,000 metric tons - a drop of 75 per cent, even though there are now three times as many people on the planet. At that time, there were at least 25 million opium addicts in China alone: there are now 13 million in the world – a 50 per cent reduction.

Opium production in the Golden Triangle dropped to 82 per cent in the last 15 years. The region, formerly notorious as the world's main heroin supplier, is now almost opium-free.

Some of the most dramatic examples of successful drug control can be seen in South East Asia.

The downward trends are symptomatic of progress made over the past few decades to bring the world drugs problem under control. The world drug problem is not solved. It is contained. On average and on the global scale, the drug problem has stabilized - whether in terms of cultivation, production or consumption for practically all major types of illicit drugs, with the notable exception of opium in Afghanistan.

But despite this overall progress, the situation remains fragile. It could be undone by an increase in production of any type of drug, or the opening of new trafficking routes, and new markets.

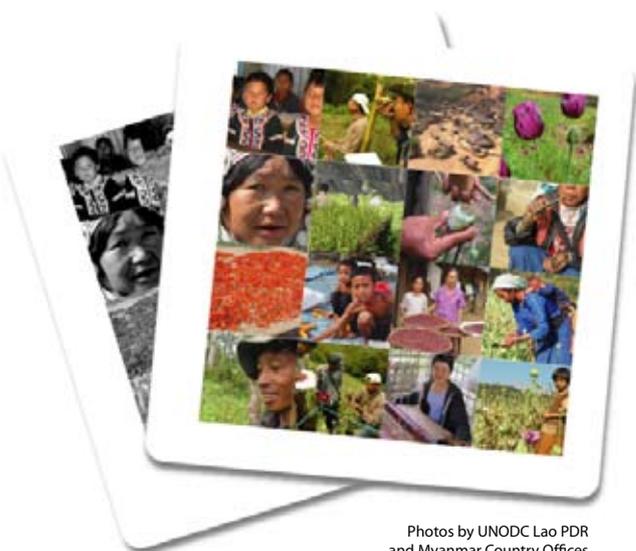
In terms of supply, farmers should be ensured of sustainable, licit livelihoods. It has been done in Thailand.

There has been some success in Lao PDR, and in some parts of Myanmar.

This kind of assistance needs to be scaled up to prevent vulnerable communities from slipping back into opium cultivation.

Reducing the supply of synthetic drugs requires a different approach since things are made rather than grown. Asia has a problem when it comes to the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants, particularly methamphetamine.

Since the problem is largely originating in Asia, it needs to be solved in Asia too by finding and destroying the superlabs and tracking the shipment of precursors. ■



Photos by UNODC Lao PDR and Myanmar Country Offices

Myanmar Implements MOU Action Plan

By **Maj. Gen. Maung Oo**

Minister of Home Affairs cum Chairman of
the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control, Myanmar

The demand reduction, law enforcement, supply reduction/alternative development projects stipulated in the Sub-regional Action Plan (SAP) of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Drug Control, developed and adopted by six MOU countries, are being implemented as a priority in Myanmar.

With the aim to eliminate poppy cultivation through increased supply reduction measures and enhanced alternative development programmes along the border areas, the Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was established in 1992. As of 2006, the Government has spent more than 3,883 million kyats to upgrade the infrastructure of the border regions contributing to the alternative development programmes to eliminate cultivation and production of drugs.

The intensified efforts of the State in developing the border areas and its national races inspired the ethnic nationals to launch their own programmes to get rid of illicit poppy cultivation. Consequently, Mong La Special Region (4) in Eastern Shan State successfully stopped poppy cultivation in 1997 followed by Kokang Special Region (1) in 2003 and Wa Special Region (2) in 2005 - which have been sustained to date.

Myanmar has embarked on a 15-year Plan in 1999, with an estimated budget of 33588.14 million kyats and 150 million US dollars to totally abolish illicit cultivation, production and abuse of narcotic drugs by 2014.

Similarly, the Opium Yield Surveys undertaken between 1993 and 2004 with the United States reported in 1996 a production of 2,560 tons of opium from 163,100 hectares. Potential production dropped to 292 tons of opium from a cultivation of 3,088 hectares demonstrating a significant decrease of 88 per cent. These figures indicate the level of success of Myanmar in drug control programmes.

Further, the Governments of Myanmar and China signed on 27 May 2006 a Memorandum of Intent on Joint Satellite Remote Sensing and Monitoring of Opium Cultivation in the northern parts of Myanmar. The benefit is that, after verifying the satellite imageries with actual ground surveys, Myanmar can take immediate enforcement measures by destroying the illicit poppy fields.

Emergence of psychotropic substances

Prior to 1990, Myanmar did not encounter any problem with psychotropic substances. The discovery of ephedrine - the main precursor for manufacturing ATS - as trafficked chemical within the region in early 1990s prompted the Myanmar Government to concentrate on controlling ATS. This eventually led to repeated seizures of ATS along borders since 1996 with the highest record at 32.43 million tablets in 2001. This is now found to be decreasing with only 19.06 million tablets seized last year. The total amount seized in the last decade adds up to more than 168 million.

While Myanmar is not in a position to produce precursors, the smuggling of precursor chemicals into the country from neighboring and other foreign countries through various means and avenues generate ATS manufacturing along the borders.

Cross-border cooperation

One of the projects under the SAP is the Cross-Border Cooperation on Law Enforcement which allows the establishment of border liaison offices between neighboring countries. The cooperation accorded through these offices resulted in seizures of large amount of drugs in numerous successful operations.

The exchange of information between neighboring countries as well as with other countries within the region to uncover regional drug smuggling gangs resulted in the expose and apprehension of international syndicates.

Myanmar signed an agreement with the Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) of Thailand on 31 July 2005. An Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters was also signed with members of ASEAN countries on 17 January 2006. Myanmar was accepted as a member of Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering on 9 March 2006. The Financial Action Task Force also revoked Myanmar from the Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories (NCCT) list on 13 October 2006 after reviewing the developments made in combating money laundering. ■

Senior Officials Committee Meeting of the Signatories to the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control

The Senior Officials Committee Meeting (SOC) of the signatory countries to the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Drug Control was held from 22-24 May 2007, in Beijing, China.

In his welcome remarks, Mr. Zhang Xinfeng, Vice Commissioner of China National Narcotics Control Commission and Vice Minister of Public Security cited the significant role that the MOU mechanism has played for 12 years in strengthening the cooperation of drug control efforts of the MOU partners. He proposed to reaffirm the commitment and deepen MOU partnership, get rid of the harm of traditional drugs such as heroin as early as possible and actively tackle the increasingly new-type of drug issues.

Mr. Akira Fujino, Representative, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok mentioned that the countries in this region were the first in the world to demonstrate the usefulness of regional cooperation under the MOU mechanism which has become an example to be replicated by other regions of the world. The Sub-regional Action Plan (SAP) reflects the countries' long-term commitment to cooperate in all aspects of drug control as well as to meet head on emerging drug control challenges.

Further partnerships not only by UNODC but by all member countries is needed. Given the current reality of

intense competition for donor attention, new strategies are required to mobilize resources.

Implementation of the Sub-regional Action Plan (SAP)

UNODC provided an overview of the demand reduction situation in the region and presented the progress of implementation of the demand reduction programme activities. Methamphetamine and ecstasy abuse continues to dominate the region. Crystal methamphetamine abuse dominates in Brunei, Japan, Philippines and parts of South China and may be increasing in the MOU signatory countries. Injecting drug use remains a major vector for HIV transmission throughout East Asia and the Pacific. There is an emergence of club drugs and the manufacture of ecstasy in Southeast Asia as the laboratories were seized in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines which also affected the drug situation in the sub-region and East Asia. UNODC also reported on the status of the following demand reduction projects: Improving ATS Data and Information Systems, Primary Prevention of ATS Abuse among Youth in Thailand and the Philippines, Reducing HIV Vulnerability from Drug Abuse, Strengthening Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care among Drug Users and in Prison Settings, and Improving Access for Young People with ATS Abuse to Effective Treatment.



Photo by NNCC, China



The MOU governments expressed appreciation of the projects “Improving ATS Data and Information Systems”, Primary Prevention of ATS Abuse among Youth in Thailand and the Philippines and requested for extension of these projects. The data collected under the project “Improving ATS Data and Information Systems” should be used as the base for early warning for new trend of drug abuse and trafficking since it is already linked to the Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (DAINAP) and the Asia and Pacific Amphetamine-Type Stimulants Information Centre (APAIC) which is an on-line clearinghouse available on the website: www.apaic.org. The development of demand reduction models under the project, “Improving Youth Access to Effective ATS Abuse Treatment” was requested.

A regional overview on illicit opium poppy cultivation, illicit drug production and progress of the project “Regional Collaboration on Community-based Alternative Development to Eliminate Opium Production in Southeast Asia” was presented by UNODC.

The decline in illicit opium production in the Golden Triangle area is a remarkable achievement. A need for continued efforts for sustainable livelihood alternatives was emphasized to prevent potential risk of re-cultivation. Opium poppy cultivation still exists in certain pockets of the region and poses a threat despite successful joint subregional comprehensive measures. Changed patterns of opium poppy cultivation was noted. Heroin manufacture continues for markets mainly within the region, although there are evidences of decline in clandestine heroin manufacture. Thailand and China has a close collaboration and cooperation with neighbouring countries and offer know-how to Myanmar and Lao PDR in coordination with UNODC. The concern was raised on the issue of illegal production and smuggling of safrole-rich oils. Attention was drawn to cannabis cultivation in the region and the

need to explore best practice for application of similar approach to opium poppy eradication. The importance of monitoring and survey of the illicit crops cultivation was recognized.

The international community and relevant international organizations should be approached for continued support and provision of technical and financial assistance to the alternative development programmes in the region.

A general overview of the situation in the region regarding the supply of illicit drugs and law enforcement activities was also presented by UNODC. The illicit manufacture and trafficking of ATS increased, coupled with shifting routes of production and trafficking. Ketamine is a growing concern in the region. Continued illicit manufacture and abuse of heroin was highlighted.

The gap between ratification and practical implementation of international drug control conventions needs to be addressed. The need to improve the regional information and intelligence exchange mechanism, especially in the central government and border levels was emphasized. Establishment of joint law enforcement mechanism and joint operations through close consultation was suggested. Clandestine laboratories are strategically located closer to market. Inadequate control of precursors and weak cooperation and coordination among countries were noted. The importance and the need for backtracking of seized precursors were noted and cooperation by all authorities was emphasized. Progress of implementation of the following projects were discussed: Development of Cross-border Law Enforcement Cooperation in East Asia, Precursor Control in East Asia, Consolidation and Enhancement of the Border Liaison Office (BLO) Mechanism, and Precursor Control in East Asia.

The Meeting appreciated the BLO mechanism and precursor control activities and acknowledged the success achieved through these projects for regional law enforcement cooperation. The need to maintain the focus on MOU signatory countries in implementing the projects was expressed. UNODC ensured that all efforts would be made to maintain this aspect.

MOU governments appreciated the project and acknowledged the benefit of having such. The capacity building aspect of the project such as the training on project design and management, and basic training on United Nations Conventions was well appreciated. The Meeting noted the increasing role that the MOU governments are playing in the MOU process. China and Lao PDR pledged to continue the annual financial contributions for the extension of the project for three years. In addition, China informed of possible increase of its contribution. ■

Meeting of Ministers of the Signatory Countries of the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control

The seventh Meeting of Ministers of the Signatory Countries to the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Drug Control and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime was held in Beijing, China on 25 May 2007.

The Meeting was opened by Mr. Zhou Yongkang, State Councilor and Commissioner of China National Narcotics Control Commission, Ministry of Public Security. He mentioned that the MOU mechanism is acclaimed as a model for subregional cooperation on drug control. However, while prominent successes have been achieved in the drug control efforts, there are new developments in the anti-drug situation in this sub-region. Drug crimes, while becoming increasingly internationalized and violent, have forged ever closer links with other transnational organized crimes. The drug control mechanism, therefore is faced with both an unprecedented opportunity of development and challenges so much so that it is imperative to reinforce the mechanism to acquire drug control funds for this sub-region.

The opening address was made by Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Mr. Costa proposed the creation of a regional drug control mechanism, using MoU states as the core and perhaps involving ASEAN members at a later stage to reduce trafficking of synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals. He mentioned that a network could be established to exchange information on traffickers and trafficking routes, production trends, and scientific data to improve regional cooperation and criminal justice, and cut the trade in these dangerous substances. He further mentioned that there must be more

awareness and leadership raised by politicians, community, leaders, parents and the media to keep people away from drugs and to bring drug abusers back into society.

Mr. Yang Fengrui, in his capacity as Chairman of the Senior Officials Committee Meeting summarized the highlights of the Senior Officials Committee Meeting, one of which was the importance of maintaining the original concept and spirit of MOU between the six MOU signatory countries and UNODC. The need to maintain the focus on MOU signatory countries in implementing the projects was also expressed. The meeting was reminded of the existing similar fora and activities regarding legal cooperation in the region such as SOMTC+3(ASEAN Senior Official Meetings on Transnational Crimes, and China, Japan and Korea), etc.

Mr. Chartchai Suthiklom, Senior Narcotics Control Advisor, Office of Narcotics Control Board, Thailand, as moderator for the revision of the Subregional Action Plan (SAP), provided a summary of the proposed revision by the Senior Officials Committee Meeting for endorsement by the Ministerial Meeting.

Mr. Hkam Awng, Joint Secretary of Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC), and Head of Office of CCDAC and Drug Enforcement Department of Myanmar Police Force, as the moderator for the revision of the Revised Addendum on Partnership to the Memorandum of Understanding provided a summary of the outcome of the Senior Officials Committee Meeting. ■



“While prominent successes have been achieved in our drug control efforts, there are some new developments in the anti-drug situation in this sub-region. Although opium poppy-growing areas have been reduced significantly, there still exists the possibility of re-cultivation in large areas. Manufacturing, trafficking and abuse of new-type drugs are spreading quickly. The effort for the drug addicts’ treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration to the society is faced with considerable pressure. Drug crimes, while becoming increasingly internationalized, intelligent and violent, have forged ever closer links with other transnational organized crimes. Therefore, it is imperative to reinforce the mechanism of acquiring drug control funds for this sub-region. The Greater Mekong Sub-region drug control mechanism is faced with both an unprecedented opportunity of development and unprecedented challenges.

Faced with new situations, new tasks and new challenges, the MOU mechanism must be strengthened instead of weakened. It must have more advanced ideas, more flexible methods, more efficient work and more pragmatic results.”

Mr. Zhou Yongkang

*State Councilor and Commissioner of China National
Narcotics Control Commission, China*

“Lao PDR has officially declared before the world in February 2006 that it is opium production-free. This is seen as historical achievement, but much more still remains to be done. It includes the need to ensure opium remains eliminated and that all former opium poppy farmers are provided with sustainable alternative livelihoods. There is the need to treat all remaining addicts, prevent both new addictions and relapses; and protect Lao PDR from being used as transit country for drugs trafficking in the region. There is a need to address the increasing problems of amphetamine-type stimulants trafficking and abuse as well as ATS-related crime and violence; and the need to strengthen legislative, judicial and law enforcement capacities to deal with these issues.

The Lao Government is adopting a multi-pronged approach. This includes a Strategic Programme for the post-opium elimination scenario and an Action Plan targeting 1,100 priority former opium-producing villages. Assistance is crucial in the transitional period going from opium elimination to normal socio-economic programming. If timely and sufficient assistance is not provided, former opium growers and abusers could use this as an excuse to return to opium poppy cultivation and consumption.”

H.E. Mr. Soubanh Srithirath

*Minister to the President Office
cum Chairman of the Lao National Commission for Drug Control
and Supervision, Lao PDR*

“I would like to award high value for the good results concerning the implementation of our six common decisions which has been issued at the 6th meeting that focus on precursors control data sharing, the control of ATS, the prevention and treatment, cross-border collaborations, training, the mutual legal assistance, sustainable reform as well as technical and financial assistances which have been smoothly and successfully progressing.

During the past two years (2005 and 2006), the drug control collaboration between our member countries, UNODC, other countries in the region as well as donor countries have developed at a level that we can be proud of. We have witnessed the goodwill and active commitment demonstrated by all governments of all MOU member countries vis-à-vis the suppression of drug trafficking, drug production, and all forms of drug abuse in our region. The result of the past two years could be considered as the basis for experimentation upon which we are hoping to double the efficiency and also to improve the way we implement our activities in the future.”

Lt. Gen. Teng Savong

*Permanent Vice Chair of the National Authority
for Combating Drugs, Cambodia*

“After 14 years since the signing of the MOU, the commitment and determination of the signatory countries of MOU to the fight against drugs in our region remain unchanged and even further strengthened. The outstanding example of our meaningful cooperation under the MOU framework is reflected in a dramatic decline of opium poppy cultivation in the Golden Triangle area over the years. This is a remarkable achievement we all should be proud of.

While we remain firm in our stance to combat the drug threats, my delegation still feel that there is an imperative need for us to continue and even upgrade our cooperation to meet the new and emerging challenges posed by the spread of conventional and new types of drugs in our respective country and beyond. We cannot fight the problem of drugs alone as the problem has transboundary effects, and thus requires concerted efforts from all concerned. On our part, we share common interest and cherish the value of drug-free environment in our Greater Mekong sub-region. We will do our best to ensure the achievement of the ultimate aim of eradication of drugs in our country and region.”

H.E. Mr. Rathakit Manathat

Ambassador of Thailand to the People's Republic of China

“Over the last decades, with the coordination of UNODC, the MOU mechanism has practically proven to be an important cooperative channel on drugs control for countries in Mekong sub-region. Under the framework of this mechanism, projects in various related aspects have been implemented; mutual understanding and exchange of experiences, information among the countries have been promoted, thus contributing to the improvement of capacity and effectiveness of the fight against illicit drugs. Efforts and achievements on drug control of the countries in the Mekong sub-region are significant, but we are witnessing new apprehensive emerging situation. That is the rising of synthetic drug abuse, the movement of drugs laboratories, the increase of HIV-affected cases through drugs injection, etc. Such new apprehensive emerging situation requires our mechanism to be suitably adjusted.

Viet Nam notes with high appreciation the great efforts made by UNODC in preparing the 6th revised Subregional Action Plan. Those amendments are really necessary for suitably meeting existing drug control requirements. We are very pleased to see that our meeting has adopted the 6th revised Subregional Action Plan and the Addendum on Partnership to the MOU among member countries and UNODC with the aim at improving further the effectiveness of drug control activities in the region.”

Pol. Lt. Gen. Dang Van Hieu

Deputy Minister of Public Security, Viet Nam

“The discovery of ephedrine - the main precursor for manufacturing ATS - as trafficked chemical within the region in early 1990s prompted us to concentrate on controlling ATS. This eventually led to repeated seizures of ATS along our borders since 1996 and the highest record is 32.43 million tablets in 2001. This is now found to be decreasing with only 19.06 million tablets seized last year. The total amount seized in the last decade adds up to more than 168 million.

Myanmar shares the view that precursor chemicals play a most vital role in ATS production. Although Myanmar is not in a position to produce such chemicals, the smuggling of precursor chemicals into Myanmar from neighboring and other foreign countries through various means and avenues generate ATS manufacturing along our borders. We realized it will be impossible for Myanmar to combat and control the menace of psychotropic substances as well as narcotic drugs single handedly and have accordingly placed emphasis on cooperation both regionally and internationally.”

Major General Maung Oo

*Minister of Home Affairs
cum Chairman of the Central Committee
for Drug Abuse Control, Myanmar*

2007 MOU Beijing Declaration

We, delegations of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), at the Seventh Ministerial Meeting of Signatory Countries of the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control (MOU) held in Beijing on 25 May 2007,

1. Satisfied with the development of drug control cooperative partnership among the six countries and the UNODC under the MOU mechanism since the first Ministerial Meeting of MOU Signatory Countries held in Beijing in 1995, as a model of successful sub-regional cooperation on drug control, with notable contribution to the implementation of the principles and goals set up by the 20th United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly held in 1998;
2. Affirming fully the smooth channels and mechanisms for timely communication, joint operations and legal assistance among the six signatory countries, formulated a solid ground for effective suppression and control of

drug related crimes and other transnational crimes in the region;

3. Appreciating highly the remarkable outcome in the sustainable alternative development through the cooperation among the six signatory countries with the assistance from the international community, especially the successive declaration of opium free in relevant MOU signatory countries evidenced by the dramatic decline of illicit opium poppy cultivation, demonstrating to the world one more best practice in eliminating illicit crop cultivation;
4. Taking note of effective models and methodologies explored and applied in recent years in the six MOU signatory countries in drug treatment and rehabilitation as well as HIV and AIDS prevention, contributing to the global efforts in reducing drug harms and promoting drug-free communities;
5. Stressing the positive role of UNODC in introducing new concepts, promoting drug control projects and increasing national drug control capacities;
6. Recognizing existing challenges, in the course of globalization, posed by the increasing complexity of means and routes of drug trafficking, the alarming development of illicit manufacture, trafficking and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) and heroin, as well as the abuse of ketamine, the remaining ineffective control mechanisms over precursor chemicals, as well as the broader linkages between international and regional drug-related crimes and other transnational crimes;
7. Aware of the close relationship between sustainable alternative development and the poverty alleviation in the social and economic development of the region, which requires continuous and long-term attention and support of international community, especially in view of the existence of remaining areas of illicit opium poppy cultivation with strong possibility of re-cultivation, that present constant threats to the region and the world;
8. Concerned deeply about the presence of large number of illicit drug users in the region, especially the increase of young people in ATS abuse and the spread of HIV through injecting drug use in some MOU signatory countries;
9. Alarmed by the frequent inflow of heroin from the Golden Crescent area, ketamine from South Asia, cocaine from South America and ecstasy from Europe, posing increasing threats to the region;
10. Concerned about the continued shortage of resources as one of the major constraints to the drug control efforts in the region;

Photos by NNCC, Cairns



Hereby declare to:

1. Reaffirm our determination to address the drug issues in the region, by joint efforts and in the principle of truthful cooperation and shared responsibility, in line with the requirements of the Political Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction, and Measures to Enhance International Cooperation to Counter the World Drug Problem adopted at the 20th United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly held in 1998;
2. Reemphasize the necessity and importance of the sub-regional MOU mechanism in solving regional drug problems and mobilizing signatory countries in active participation with their respective strengths and advantages;
3. Reaffirm also the consensus reached by all signatory countries and the UNODC in the Siem Reap Declaration adopted at the 6th Ministerial Meeting of MOU Signatory Countries to the 1993 MOU in 2005;
4. Decide to enhance the partnership in drug control and ensure the MOU mechanism as a mutually beneficial, efficient, flexible and substantial platform for sub-regional drug control cooperation; to increase technical, financial and in-kind contribution to the MOU mechanism in line with sound responsibility and ownership; to improve timely communication and consultation on major drug issues; to advocate the outcomes and achievements to the international community, particularly to the major donors;
5. Call upon countries in and out of the region to take stronger measures, through flexible bilateral and multilateral cooperation, in effective monitoring and eradication of illicit opium poppy cultivation and in promoting sustainable alternative development, with the ultimate aim of elimination of illicit opium poppy cultivation in the region in the near future;
6. Agree to further enhance regional and sub-regional law enforcement cooperation to effectively suppress transnational drug manufacture and trafficking, including personnel training at various levels, intelligence and information sharing, joint investigation, mutual legal assistance, and close coordination in cross-border operations;
7. Decide also to improve cooperative mechanism for information/intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination, with a special emphasis on the monitoring and forecast of the ATS related crimes;
8. Decide further to increase the awareness of the harms of ATS, ketamine and other new types of illicit drugs among the young people and other high-risk groups, and to share experience on treatment and rehabilitation of heroin and ATS dependants as well as HIV prevention, and to develop joint civic awareness programmes among member countries;



Photos by NNCC, China



9. Decide again to establish and improve the legal system of precursor chemical control, and apply stronger national control and international monitoring measures among signatory countries in the efforts of prevention of precursor diversion;
10. Agree to establish mechanisms for proper communication, coordination and collaboration with other international and regional drug control organizations with a view to reducing drug threats from other regions;
11. Call upon the international community, in the principle of shared responsibility, to continue its moral, technical and financial support to the drug control efforts in the region;
12. Express sincere gratitude to the relevant international organizations and major donor countries for their valuable technical and financial support, which has been a strong boost to drug control efforts in the region;
13. Express appreciation to delegations from signatory countries and the UNODC for their active participation which contributes to the success of the meeting;
14. Express deep gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of China for the excellent arrangement, warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to all participants to the Seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Signatory Countries to the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control. ■

News Briefs

ATS data and information systems

ATS and other drug-related data from The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries and China have been collected through the on-line Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (DAINAP). The data and analysis were published in a report “Patterns and Trends of Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) and Other Drugs of Abuse in East Asia and the Pacific”.

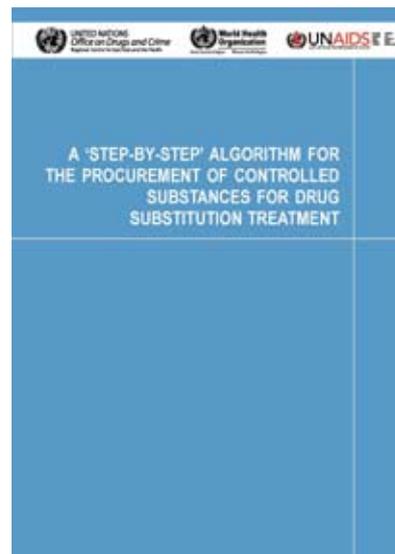
Analysis revealed that majority of countries in East Asia and the Pacific rank methamphetamine as the primary or secondary drug of abuse, that arrest and treatment statistics in many countries are dominated by methamphetamine, and seizures for both tablet and crystal methamphetamine increased in 2006 from 2005. Heroin seizures generally declined in 2006 while many countries are reporting ketamine as an emerging substance of concern.



as well as on the provision of quality drug treatment in prison settings in the Greater Mekong Sub-region.

UNODC supported the development of a publication, “A Step-by-Step Algorithm for the Procurement of Controlled Substances for Drug Substitution Treatment” in collaboration with the Regional Task Force on IDU and HIV/AIDS for Asia and the Pacific. The publication will assist countries import international controlled drugs that are needed for drug substitution treatment for opioid dependence, e.g. methadone, buprenorphine. It provides easy step-by-step directions for government officials to follow for successful and efficient importation.

In addition, the project supported the publication, “Regional Training on Best Practice on Demand Reduction and HIV/AIDS” for government officials. The impact of such training is to increase the capacity of national programme officers to appropriately assess, plan, deliver and evaluate programmes on drug demand reduction including HIV/AIDS prevention in the Greater Mekong Sub-region.



UNODC Photos

Reducing HIV vulnerability

An analysis of policy and research on drug demand reduction strategies for prisoners in China, Indonesia and Viet Nam is currently being conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific. A study on HIV/AIDS and Custodial Settings in South East Asia: An Exploratory Review into the Issue of HIV/AIDS and Custodial Settings in Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam was recently published. The report was disseminated through the Regional Task Force on IDU and HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, as well as other fora.

Through these studies, it is expected that there would be an increase in regional awareness on the issue of HIV/AIDS, including transmission modes and knowledge of staff

Drug dependency treatment and rehabilitation

The inception meeting for a project on improving access for young people with ATS abuse to effective treatment was organized for the six Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) countries, Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam from 9 to 11 May 2007 at Yangon, Myanmar. Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines were invited as expert countries to share their expertise on ATS treatment and training.

The increasing use of ATS and the lack of trained personnel in the existing treatment centres to provide effective responses to the newly emerging ATS use were

cross-cutting problems across the region. The meeting provided a platform for country delegates and other agency representatives to discuss the emerging issue of ATS use and treatment for young people and to strengthen regional partnerships. Participants agreed that the inception meeting had provided them with a platform to deal with ATS abuse in treatment centres and community settings. The participants who attended were from the national narcotic control bureaus, ministries of health, public security, law enforcement and justice from all participating countries.

Community-based drug abuse prevention, treatment and rehabilitation in Cambodia

Community counselling teams will be formed in 25 vulnerable communes and referral linkages will be developed from the commune to the referral hospital and the treatment-rehab centre. The health sector will be linked up with the drug sector establishing firm criteria for treatment and referral services. Vulnerable at-risk populations, drug affected families and drug users will be reached, cared for and supported.

For the first time in Cambodia, drug-affected family workshops were held in Sihanoukville, Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchay and Battambang provinces. Representatives from NACD, National Mental Health Programme, Health and Provincial Deputy Governor presided and facilitated the process. The workshops brought together key stakeholders from monasteries, education, health, anti-drug department, military, civil police sectors and non-governmental organizations.

Criminal justice

The ASEAN Ad-Hoc Experts Meeting on Anti-Corruption held in May 2007 in Jakarta exhibited Indonesia's desire to see UNODC Regional Centre play a significant role for its implementation in the region through a strategic partnership with the ASEAN Secretariat.

The Border Liaison Office (BLO) concept was considered a hallmark example of multilateral law enforcement cooperation. Its success led to calls from participating states, other United Nations agencies such as United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (UNIAP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), etc., to expand the BLO mechanism to other areas of cross-border crimes, including human trafficking, migrant smuggling, environmental and wildlife crimes. These organizations found that the challenges and opportunities facing them appear to be very similar to the challenges faced by cross-border projects being implemented by the Regional Centre, as these crimes are committed using cross-border routing at the existing BLO locations.

Discussions have been held with the Narcotic Administration Section (NAS), US Embassy, Bangkok; Swedish Embassy, Bangkok; International Management of Serious

Crime Course, in Singapore; ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), in Jakarta, Indonesia; and the 7th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (SDHS), Thailand adopted the BLO concept and expanded its BLO mandate to cooperate with Myanmar BLOs in combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

Countries signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Drug Control also expressed their strong need for the expansion of geographical coverage by establishing new BLOs in Cambodia.

Precursor control

National workshops were conducted. As a result, Lao PDR identified measures to control saffrole rich oil, the production and trade of which they had no knowledge of prior to the survey conducted by UNODC. At the workshop in Viet Nam, information on the production of and trade in the oil in Cambodia and Lao PDR including the trading/smuggling points at the common border, were revealed and assisted Viet Nam in formulating measures.

Major recommendations proposed at the two workshops included new control and monitoring measures, involvement of forestry officials in controlling the oil, reassessment of policies on the production and trade of the oil, and the need for bilateral discussions with trading partners to stem illegal trade and regularize licit trade.

Terrorism prevention

The Regional Centre, through the Legal Expert in terrorism prevention participated in the "5th ASEM Conference on Counter-Terrorism" where a presentation of universal counter-terrorism legal framework was made. The conference was held in Tokyo in May 2007.

UNODC organized and participated in the "Workshop on Strengthening National Legislation on Counter-Terrorism" in Hanoi, Viet Nam in May 2007, and made five presentations on various legal aspects of counter-terrorism issues, including introduction of UNODC tools and database. The legal expert also met officials from relevant agencies to discuss possible UNODC technical assistance.

UNODC assisted in the organization of and participated in "UNODC-Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) Sub-Regional Consultation in Fiji in June 2007, on measures for the legislative implementation of the legal regime against terrorism in the Pacific region and related technical assistance delivery. A presentation on universal counter-terrorism legal regime, including introduction of UNODC tools and database was made at the conference.

Computer-based training (CBT)

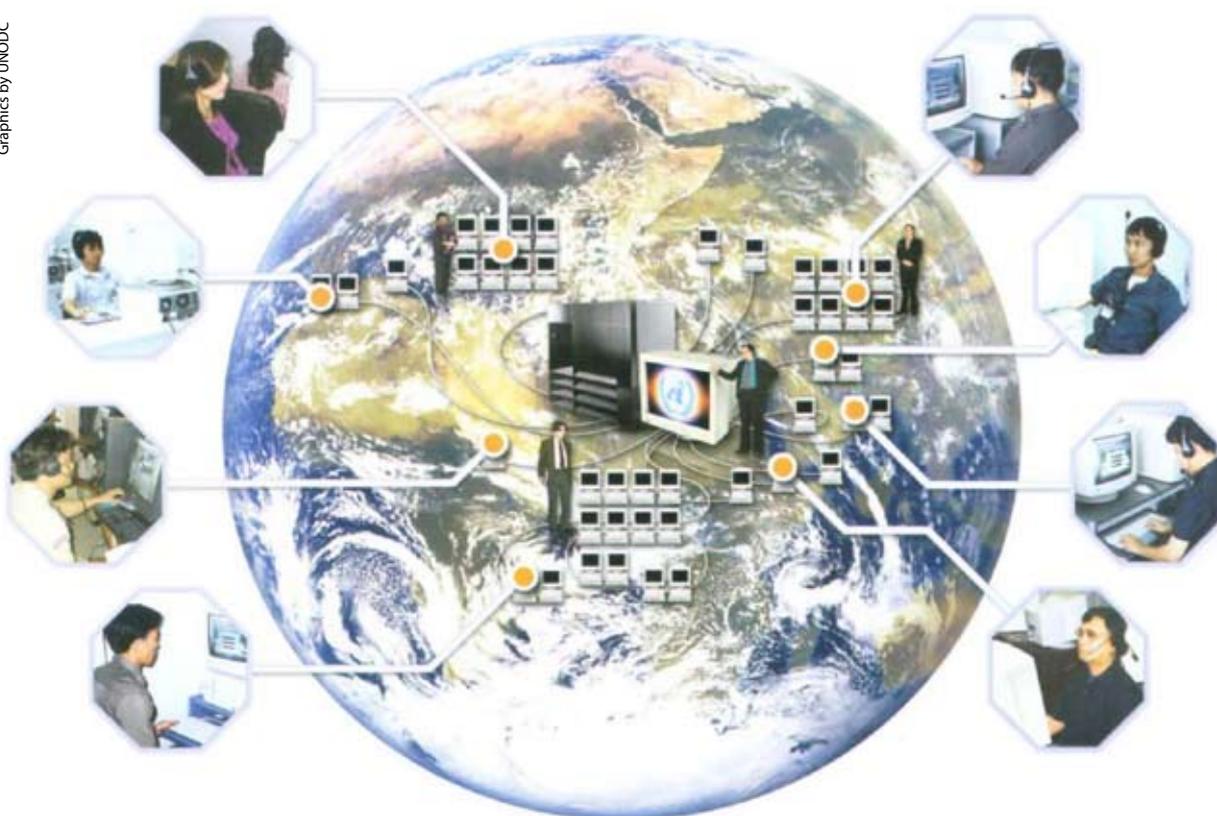
The final versions of the Basic Intelligence Awareness programme in English, Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Malay have been completed.

The programme consists of three training modules: introduction to intelligence, the application of intelligence, and the intelligence cycle. The Basic Intelligence Analysis programme has been completed which comprises of six modules: introduction to basic intelligence analysis, the

association matrix, the association link chart, the event flow chart, the commodity flow chart, and developing a conclusion.

Plans have been made with counterparts in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to visit all existing CBT centres within the year to install all the new modules available, i.e., Basic Intelligence Awareness, Precursor Interdiction and Clandestine Laboratories and Human Trafficking. ■

Graphics by UNODC



India and Cambodia Partnership

The problem of drug trafficking affects India as much as Cambodia. With induction of Myanmar into ASEAN, India is now a direct neighbour with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) of which Cambodia is a member; neither party can be immune to the challenges and problems emerging in the other. Also, drugs today are not a stand-alone problem, but are intimately linked to problems such as terrorism and organized crime. India and Cambodia, therefore, can, and must, form a partnership to tackle the combined menace.

The two countries signed an enabling legal framework—the Agreement on Combating International Terrorism, Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking in December 2005.

Under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, the Indian government offers a large number of short-term scholarships every year to Cambodian trainees in their specific areas of interest or work. ■

ASEAN Ad-Hoc Experts Meeting on Anti Corruption 1-2 May 2007, Jakarta, Indonesia

The above meeting was organized by the Government of Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the support of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat as decided at the 6th Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) on 7-8 June, 2006 in Bali. Each country was represented by a high level technical delegation in charge of discussing proposals for a "roadmap" for the ASEAN Security Community (ASC) Plan of Action aiming at implementing efficient mechanisms to fight corruption in the region. The recommendations of this conference are to be presented at the 7th SOMTC which will be held in Lao, PDR.

The 6th SOMTC aimed to establish and strengthen collaborative efforts against corruption among the Parties; increase capacity and institutional building among the Parties in preventing and combating corruption; and discuss regional cooperation, particularly assets recovery under international and regional instruments.

UNODC, represented by Mr. Michel Bonnieu, Senior Regional Legal Advisor, Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific delivered a keynote speech on the technical aspects of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Mr. Bonnieu also made a presentation on the mechanisms for international cooperation under United Nations Conventions with a specific focus on the issue of assets recovery in corruption offences.

Mr. Bonnieu noted that the participants gave a strong support of the UNCAC Convention in general and recognized the significant role of UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific in the implementation of the Convention. The recommendations of the meeting highlighted the critical role UNODC could play in future through a strategic partnership with the ASEAN Secretariat. ■

BLOs Potential for Control of Endangered Species

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) is seeking ways in cooperating with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific in using existing Border Liaison Office (BLO) mechanism for ASEAN wildlife enforcement activities. At the 2nd Meeting of the ASEAN-WEN at Taman Safari Indonesia, Borgor, Indonesia, Mr. Songsatit Kittikhunwatchana, Project Coordinator, UNODC Regional Centre presented the BLO mechanism and discussed with the participants opportunities of working together.

The meeting was attended by delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and a representative from the ASEAN Secretariat. Representatives from invited countries namely China and the United States of America (USAID and US Department of Justice) as well as from partner organizations such as the ASEAN-WEN Support Programme comprising of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia and Wildlife Alliance, UNODC, International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), and the TRAFFIC Europe attended the meeting as observers. It was noted that the



Graphics from
ASEAN-WEN website

BLOs are located in many of the same border zones where illicit wildlife trafficking occurs.

This has resulted in UNODC, in partnership with UNEP, Traffic and Wildlife Alliance to seek to enlarge the mandate of the BLOs to include human trafficking and environmental crimes. This initiative is in line with the Convention on Transnational Crime, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Montreal Protocol and the Basel Convention and the concept of human security.

For further information, contact Songsatit Kittikhunwatchana, Project Coordinator, UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, E-mail: <songsatit.kittikhunwatchana@unodc.org> ■

Challenges in Investigation and Adjudication of Drug-related Offences

10-20 June 2007

Republic of Moldova and Ukraine

The above workshops were organized within the framework of the programme of assistance for the prevention of drug abuse and drug trafficking in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova (BUMAD Programme) funded by the European Union and jointly organized by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Mr. Michel Bonnieu, Senior Regional Legal Advisor, UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific provided technical expertise during the workshops.

For each seminar, 30 practitioners representing national agencies in BUMAD countries involved in drug-related casework (i.e., courts, prosecutors' offices, ministries of interior, justice, health, national security, customs bodies, border guard bodies and specialized anti-corruption bodies) attended the seminar. Other participants and speakers were judges/prosecutors/legal experts from various foreign countries or agencies (European Union, Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office of the United Kingdom, European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, Council of Europe, Federal Service on Drug Control of the Russian Federation, police liaison officers of the Embassies of the Netherlands, Denmark, and United States country attaché of the Drug Enforcement Administration based in Warsaw).

Technical sessions on the following topics were held:

- Investigation and adjudication of minor offences related to drugs (narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances).
- Instruments and initiatives of the United Nations and other international organizations in the area of illicit consumption of drugs.
- Investigation and adjudication of transnational offences related to illicit drugs (narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors).
- Detection and investigation of transnational drug-related offences: coordination mechanism among law enforcement agencies, joint investigations, under-cover operations.
- Financial investigations concerning detection and confiscation of proceeds derived from drug offences.
- Case studies – lessons learned and best practices.

The seminars discussed specifics of detection, investigation and adjudication of the offences related to personal consumption of illicit drugs and of transnational drug offences. Discussions were focused on sanctions alternative to imprisonment, financial investigations, asset recovery and international legal cooperation.

In the course of the discussions on mutual legal assistance particularly in connection with asset recovery, several speakers spoke highly of the utility of the computerized Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) toolkit which UNODC has developed and the overall expertise of UNODC in this field.

Results achieved

Both seminars contributed to strengthening the capacities of judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officers in the investigation and adjudication of drug-related offences. They also contributed to promote increased sentencing efficiency through the review of international standards, legislation and practice of the participating countries, discussions and exchanges of experience. The seminars enforced informal links among law-enforcement and judicial personnel of the participating countries.

Throughout both seminars, UNODC legal advisors had the opportunity to exchange views on the main priorities in the two regions they are covering.

Further bilateral discussions with some of the participants/speakers reflect the need for similar practical training and exchange of experiences between the two regions based on what is known on the current international routes, new trends and origin and destination countries where synthetic drugs are concerned.

For further information, contact Michel Bonnieu, Senior Regional Legal Advisor, UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, E-mail: <[a href="mailto:michel.bonnieu@unodc.org">michel.bonnieu@unodc.org> ■

International Congress Discusses Financial Crime Issues

By **Olivia Sylvia Inciong**
UNODC Regional Centre

More than 200 experts from law enforcement agencies, multilateral organizations, customs, industry and academia representing 60 countries participated in the Global Financial Crime Congress held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting, jointly organized by INTERPOL and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) discussed key issues on money laundering, terrorism financing and corruption and identified methods of improving communication and co-ordination between the public and private sectors in combating financial crime.

The three-day Congress also aimed to identify and assess the latest developments, technologies and strategies which are working in combating financial crime, in addition to finding new solutions and opportunities to enhance co-operation between and among law enforcement and the private sector. Police General Prung Boonpadung, Assistant Commissioner General of the Royal Thai Police welcomed the participants.

“Financial crime, though it receives far less attention from the media than violent crime, has a devastating impact on individuals, industries, governments, and societies,” said INTERPOL Secretary General Ronald K. Noble.

“It poses a serious national and international security threat, and provides the fuel for drug dealers, terrorists, illegal arms dealers, corrupt public officials, and others to operate and expand their criminal enterprises.”

The Congress underlined the growing international solidarity to tackle financial crime and aims at building synergies across agencies and sectors.

In a written message, UNODC’s Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa welcomed the increased co-operation with INTERPOL in helping countries combat financial crime. “National economies everywhere, and certainly in the developing world, suffer damage caused by the infiltration of criminal proceeds, including the ill-gotten gains from corruption and those funds destined for use in terrorist activities. Tracing, seizing and confiscating these funds is of the highest priority - in order to cut off the lifeblood of the underlying crime, and to plough those assets back into much-needed development. The Congress will strengthen our joint efforts to better equip states for this battle.”

The international legal frameworks addressing transnational crime and their corresponding set of national laws and regulations - is growing. The United Nations Conventions against Corruption and Transnational Organized Crime are the most recent legal tools developed. One of UNODC’s priorities is to help States implement these instruments.

“We are dealing with a scenario where legal business activities and institutions such as information technology, banking, financial markets and services are increasingly exposed to criminals using them for illicit purposes. This calls for a broad, comprehensive response bringing together in a global partnership the business community, including the banking industry, government institutions and law enforcement and criminal justice,” said Mr. Akira Fujino, Representative, UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, based in Bangkok.

In 2006, INTERPOL announced the creation of its Anti-Corruption Academy which will provide training, education and technical assistance to member countries, and will also conduct research on trends, best practice and new techniques in anti-corruption investigations. ■

UN Drugs Chief Calls for Introduction of Drug Testing to Help Curb Substance Abuse

“Road testing works for alcohol; it will work for drugs,” said Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

He lauded the efforts by the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and some EU countries to introduce such measures. He said drug control was a community-

wide responsibility and substance addiction was treatable. However, prevention and treatment, the keys to drug control, were inadequate in many cities, which fuelled the spread of HIV/AIDS, and drug-related crime.

“One of the biggest challenges for mankind is to prevent drugs and crime from destroying our cities,” Mr Costa said. ■

Support for Victims/Witnesses of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Philippines

As of June 2007, the project has provided assistance to 315 victims of human trafficking. The project has been successful in building a wide range of partnerships with relevant agencies. The project has established good collaboration with criminal justice system offices including law enforcement authorities for their support to the victims.

The project has established good partnerships with relevant organizations with support from regional/local offices of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Local Government Units, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and with functional regional and local level of Interagency Council against Trafficking (IACAT). Data banking of existing programmes and services in one of the pilot areas (Region 8) has been established. The Basic Computer Course has been proven useful and is in great demand from the victims and families. The project initiates corporate and apprenticeships and is able to assist some victims to be hired for jobs. Eleven victims have been job-placed under the project.

The Victim Assistance Workers' (VAW) roles in assisting the victims especially in criminal justice system are very crucial to the success of the project. Continuing the services of the VAW would contribute to sustaining the project models. With regard to community advocacy and education, the project receives good responses and has strong networks with other agencies in community advocacy and education.

The victims and their families were provided with legal assistance when they filed cases against traffickers.

For further information, contact Jamnan Panpatama, Project Coordinator, UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, E-mail: <jamnan.panpatama@unodc.org> ■

World Bank and UNODC Launch StAR Initiative

The Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative was launched by the World Bank and UNODC at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 17 September 2007. The Secretary-General hosted the meeting with presentations by Mr. Robert Zoellick, the President of the World Bank, and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of UNODC.

The purpose of the initiative is to help countries recover assets illegally taken by political leaders and civil servants, and subsequently hidden in other countries.

The primary expression of this global commitment is found in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which came into force in December 2005. Specifically, the Convention devotes an entire chapter to Asset Recovery. UNODC, as the custodian of this international agreement is pleased to have the World Bank as a partner in carrying out the critically important mandates under asset recovery. The StAR initiative is the result of this partnership.

A joint World Bank/UNODC secretariat with experts from both institutions will manage the implementation of STAR. This secretariat will be housed at the World Bank in Washington D.C.

The StAR initiative will begin with a selection of pilot countries which would receive intense technical assistance both in the form of helping states to recover stolen assets as well as preventing assets from being stolen again. Additionally, the StAR will sponsor a variety of activities on sharing experiences in stolen asset recovery, as well as housing critical information on best practices. The StAR will seek ways of including civil society and the media in the initiative and help create a Friends of StAR group composed of influential individuals to draw global attention to this important issue.

For more information, check out: http://www.unodc.org/unodc/press_release_2007_09_17.html ■

Do Drugs Control Your Life?

Nearly 10 years ago, the General Assembly adopted a political declaration on the global drug problem that states the following:

“Drugs destroy lives and communities, undermine sustainable human development and generate crime. Drugs affect all sectors of society in all countries; in particular, drug abuse affects the freedom and development of young people, the world’s most valuable asset.”

Drug abuse, production and trafficking were considered then and now as key areas to tackle in the fight against illicit drugs.

In 2007, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the global forum for international cooperation against the world drug problem, marked its 50th session, and in 2008/2009 the international community will be reviewing the UNGASS on the global drug problem.

With its anti-drug campaign, UNODC aims to raise awareness of the all-round problem that drugs present to society, highlighting that their destructive effects concern all. The campaign’s goal is to inspire people and mobilize support for drug control.

The multi-year campaign focuses on drug abuse in 2007, drug cultivation and production in 2008, and illicit

trafficking in 2009. The same slogan will be used throughout the campaign.

For the second year since 2006, the UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific celebrated the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in partnership with Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park) located at Central World Plaza, Bangkok. The event was carried out in partnership with the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), Siam Music Yamaha Co., Ltd., Master Phone Co., Ltd., Advance Info Service PLC, S&P Syndicate Public Co., Ltd., Dole Thailand Ltd., Nestlé (Thailand) Ltd., Mor Mee Co., Ltd., and Kantana Group Public Company Limited.

One of the major highlights of this year’s event is the sending out of SMS (text messages) about the international day through Thailand’s major mobile company. A total of 300,000 subscribers were reached through this partnership.

Your life. Your community. No place for drugs.

Myanmar

This year, the UNODC Country Office in Myanmar supported the ceremony of the Government’s Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control organized in Lashio, northern Myanmar. Campaign products were distributed consisting of red bags with the UNODC campaign logo. Inside the bag were tea bags from the UNODC sustainable alternative development initiative in Wa Special Region 2 of Shan State, UNODC brochures, as well as t-shirt, pen and publications provided by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Posters were distributed in Yangon to United Nations agencies and the diplomatic community, and in Lashio to drop-in centres, partner non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and schools.



Graphics by UNODC Myanmar Country Office

Cambodia

Twenty-two provinces organized events in their respective towns, with the main celebration presided over by Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng, who also chairs the National Authority for Combating Drugs. The main event, which was supported by UNODC and a number of partners, was held in Battambang Province and attended by about 4,000 participants, including high-ranking government officials and representatives of embassies, United Nations agencies, non-government organizations, local authorities, teachers, pupils and people from nearby communities.

The UNODC Project Office in Cambodia supported the “self-help is the best help” campaign by hosting the following competitions:

Best idea from a commune leader for drug-free communes

How leaders can keep their communes drug-free by using local resources and creating a referral network for care and support for those who abuse drugs. (500 words)

Best idea from a teacher keeping youth drug-free

How and why teachers are best suited to spot early drug use by in-school and out-of-school youth and what teachers can do to care for and support drug users and their families. (500 words)

Best idea from schools for anti-drug campaigns

How schools can get local businesses (especially those connected with increasing the community’s vulnerability to alcohol, drugs and risky sex) to contribute financially to a painting competition for secondary school children on this year’s theme for 26 June. (500 words)

Best idea from a former drug user on how to be a role model for vulnerable youth

How former drug users can serve as role models for youth by informing them and the community about the dangers of drug use and by helping youth in treatment centres to become drug-free. (500 words)

Philippines

The Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) organized the non-governmental organizations (NGO) summit on preventing amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) abuse. The summit was participated in by representatives of the school, community, media, workplace, church and treatment-based organizations.

About 2,000 elementary and secondary students attended the launch of the Drug-Free Marshall programme.

A concert was organized which featured professional bands under the label Sony BMG Records. A popular actor was chosen to be the DDB Youth Ambassador in July this year.

Centennial Force Foundation, Inc-Luzon, a Philippine NGO, organized activities in partnership with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, DDB, Department of Education, Bagong Silang Supreme Student Government and Advisers, Philippine National Police, and Book of Hope Philippines.

The Drug-Free Marshal Programme in the Philippines, is an innovative campaign against drug abuse. The programme forges effective coalition and collaboration with new and existing institutions to secure partnership and community-wide support for drug-free initiatives such as involvement of different alternative campaigns against drug abuse through music, arts, drama, sports and other wholesome activities. Reporting thru the appointed school coordinator of the programme, any illegal activities done in the school or community could be brought to the attention of authorities with assured confidentiality.

The Drug-Free Marshal Programme brings everyone of all backgrounds and ages together to identify and correct problems unique to their schools, communities, and workplaces; empowers everyone to take an active role in addressing the problems around them; gives everyone the ownership of the Drug-Free Marshals programme for their school, streets, neighborhood, public housing site, recreational centre or park, workplace and government offices; and educates children as young as six on the dangers of drugs, and to challenge them to remain drug-free. They demonstrate their commitment by being “sworn in” as Drug-Free Marshals, pledging to remain drug-free and to encourage their peers to do the same.

One pledges to lead the way by living a drug-free life; showing friends that a drug-free life is more fun; helping drug-free marshals; learning more about how drugs really harm people; telling people the truth about the harmful effects of drugs; helping one’s family and friends to be drug-free; and setting a good example to all Filipinos by leading the way to a drug-free Philippines.

For more information, contact Mark Gabumpa, Luzon Vice President, Centennial Force Foundation, Inc., E-mail: <centennialforce_luzon@yahoo.com>

Thailand



In partnership with Government counterparts, NGOs and the private sector, UNODC Regional Centre commemorated the International Day with an event held on 30 June 2007 at the Thailand Knowledge Park. The event targeted underprivileged children in the slum areas and orphanages in Bangkok, as well as children enrolled in selected schools. It featured musical performances, voice training sessions, talk shows with local celebrities, and numerous games. About 3,000 kids took part in the event.

One of the event partners, Siam Music Yamaha, held a programme of music performances by their students of piano, guitar and electronic organ. Yamaha also conducted a voice-training workshop and awarded three music lesson scholarships.

The Office of the Narcotics Control Board of Thailand organized an exhibition and administered games for children. The Office organized a question and answer session with a WBC light-flyweight female champion who used to be a drug pusher and is now the World Champion.

Other partners provided snacks, drinks and giveaways.

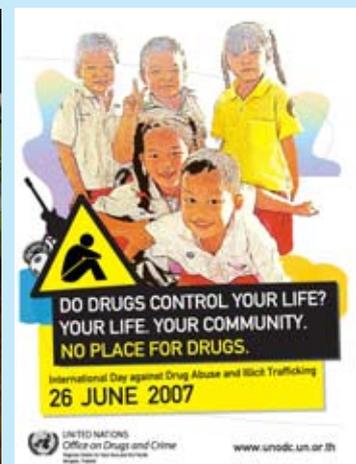
UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific teamed up with one of the country's largest mobile telephone companies to send text messages (SMS) about the theme of the international day and reaching out 300,000 mobile phone subscribers.

A public service announcement was developed and broadcast free of charge, in Thai and English, from 12 to 30 June by True Vision, the biggest cable television channel in Thailand.



The UNODC Representative gave an interview to Radio Thailand on the campaign theme and UNODC's work in curbing illicit drugs in the region.

A poster was conceptualized, designed and produced by the Regional Centre. Templates of the poster were also sent to other countries in the region. Other products included notebooks, fashion pins and T-shirts.



Viet Nam

The Ministry of Public Security organized a seminar on drug prevention and control in the Northwest Region on 22 June under the chairmanship of General Le The Tiem, Vice Minister of Public Security, and Mr. Thao Xuan Sung, Party Chief of Son La Province. General Tiem said the local authorities should develop a specific work plan for allocating human and financial resources to combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking in the region.

A rally attended by thousands of people was held that same night in Son La Town to demonstrate commitment to drug control through a dance and song performance by the Youth Theatre. The UNODC Representative attended the meeting together with senior government officials. The show and an interview with the Representative were broadcast on national television.

The government launched a campaign aiming to stamp out drug abuse and illicit trafficking with the slogan “Every commune, ward, town and residential area is free from drugs and social ills”. The campaign, from 26 May to 26 September, called on different Government institutions to keep a close watch on border areas and cooperate to raise the general public’s awareness about the dangers associated with drugs.

The Youth Union held a TV talk on 8 June with drug users, women and youth volunteers from Hai Phong and Ha Noi. Counter Narcotics Police Chief Vu Hung Vuong talked about the drug trends in Viet Nam, saying that heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) trafficking is increasing. A Hai Phong youth leader

highlighted the role of young people in drug prevention in the community.

On 12 June, the Ministry of Public Security in collaboration with Nhan Dan (People) Daily newspaper organized a meeting with outstanding drug fighters in Ha Noi. The meeting honoured 37 agencies and 111 individuals who are in the front line of the battle against drugs and crime.

On 25 June, the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Public Security signed an action plan against drugs in schools for 2007-2010 in Thanh Hoa. Raincoats were also distributed for the occasion, with the campaign logo, in Vietnamese, printed on the back. A leaflet informed people about ecstasy. On the cover, it read: “Using ecstasy? Not such a good idea.” Inside the leaflet, the myths and facts related to ecstasy were explained. The leaflet included a sticker of a person on a motorbike that read, “Fill me up with gas, not drugs.” The idea was that drivers would stick the stickers at the back of their motorbikes.

The UNODC Country Office in Viet Nam produced promotional materials including posters, notebooks, key ribbons, raincoats, stickers and leaflets with the 26 June logo and related messages in the local language. The materials were distributed to the Standing Office on Drug Control (SODC), the Women’s Union, project sites, communities, drug treatment centres and students through a countrywide network of youth volunteers and members of anti-drug advocacy clubs established by the UNODC-supported project on drug prevention. ■



Photo by UNODC Viet Nam Country Office

“Drug Abuse Brings Anguish and Torment...”

Drug abuse is a problem that can be prevented, treated and controlled. While efforts must be stepped up to reduce supply -- by helping growers of illicit crops find viable licit alternatives, and ensuring that law enforcement agencies continue their good work in seizing drugs -- the greatest challenge in global drug control is reducing demand. With less demand, there would be less need for supply, and fewer incentives for criminals to traffic drugs.

Combatting drug abuse is a collective effort. It requires political leadership and sufficient resources -- particularly for more and better treatment facilities. It requires the engagement of parents and teachers as well as health care and social workers. It requires the media and criminal justice officials to play their part.

All walks of life must join forces and devote special attention to the vulnerable: to those who are vulnerable to taking drugs because of their personal or family situation, and to those who are vulnerable because they take drugs. Our mission is to enable them to take control of their lives, rather than allowing their lives to be controlled by drugs. That means giving young people sound guidance, employment opportunities, and the chance to be involved in activities that help organize life and give it meaning and value. It means supporting parents' efforts to provide love and leadership. It means reaching out to marginalized groups and ensuring they receive the care they need to cope with behavioural, psychological or medical problems. It means providing reasons to hope.



UN Photo/Mark Garten

For those who are grappling with addiction, effective treatment is essential. Drug abuse is a disease that must be treated on the basis of evidence, not ideology. I urge Member States to devote more attention to early detection; to do more to prevent the spread of disease -- particularly HIV and hepatitis -- through drug use; to treat all forms of addiction; and to integrate drug treatment into the mainstream of public health and social services.

Drug abuse brings anguish and torment to individuals and their loved ones. It eats away at the fabric of the human being, of the family, of society. It is a subject all of us must take personally. On this International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, let us ensure there is no place for drugs in our lives or our communities.

Ban Ki-Moon
The United Nations Secretary-General

Lao PDR

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Lao PDR Country Office and the Embassy of the United States in Vientiane jointly organized a mini marathon on June 26 to commemorate the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The event, participated in by 2,000 people, served both to raise awareness of the dangers posed by illicit drugs and to promote a healthy lifestyle that incorporated physical fitness. Youth organizations, families, and athletes joined Deputy Prime Minister Asang Laoly and Minister Soubanh Siritirath for the run/walk.



Photo by UNODC Lao PDR Country Office

“There is Still Much Work to be Done.”

UN Photo/Paulo Figueiras



As we mark International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, there is some ground for optimism that the runaway train of drug addiction is being slowed down. The 2007 World Drug Report issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provides further evidence that the world drug problem is being controlled. For almost every kind of illicit drug – cocaine, heroin, cannabis and amphetamine-type stimulants – there are signs of overall stability, whether we speak of cultivation, production or abuse.

Some obvious problems remain, like opium in the South of Afghanistan – a cancer that threatens security and health and breeds corruption. Furthermore, progress made in some countries is being offset by negative

trends elsewhere. It is also hard to be conclusive about the drug situation in some of the world’s biggest and fastest growing countries because of a lack of data. Nevertheless, from a global perspective, the problem seems to be contained. In the past few years, the world drug situation has stabilized.

This does not mean that the drug problem has been solved or that we can become complacent. Drugs remain a deadly form of addiction, pose a real danger to security and health, and are ruining the lives of millions of people worldwide. There is still much work to be done.

Since we should not take our foot off the brake, I encourage you to use the occasion of this day to impress upon your governments, your family, friends and co-workers the need to continue to push back against drugs.

Further support is needed to reduce the vulnerability of farmers to the temptation of illicit incomes. Further improvements are needed in drug law enforcement – particularly through regional cooperation – to stop the drug producers and traffickers.

But even if the entire supply of drugs could be eliminated at the source and seized along trafficking routes, there would still be millions of drug addicts looking for a way to satisfy their addiction. Therefore, the highest priorities in the fight against drugs should be prevention, helping people free themselves from drug dependence, and getting them back into society.

It is encouraging to see a growing realization that drug addiction is an illness that can be prevented and treated. More investment is needed. This is an investment in the health of our societies as much as treating HIV, diabetes or tuberculosis.

In the years ahead, we hope that evidence will grow to support the trend towards a tipping point in the fight against drugs. If we all, within our communities and among the family of states, continue to shoulder our share of the responsibility, further progress can be made.

Antonio Maria Costa
UNODC Executive Director

UNODC June 26 Campaign Slogans

2007-2009 “Do drugs control your life? Your life. Your community. No place for drugs.”

- 2006 “Drugs are not child’s play”
- 2005 “Value yourself...make healthy choices”
- 2004 “Drugs: treatment works”
- 2003 “Let’s talk about drugs”
- 2002 “Substance abuse and HIV/AIDS”
- 2001 “Sports against drugs”
- 2000 “Facing reality: denial, corruption and violence”
- 1999 “Music against drugs”
- 1998 “Youth uniting to prevent drug abuse”



Regional Workshop on Best Practices in Drug Abuse Prevention Campaigns 23-27 April 2007 Palm Garden Hotel, Putrajaya, Malaysia

The regional workshop is one of the capacity-building initiatives under the G69 project, "Promotion of Public Awareness on the Dangers of Drugs in East Asia". It aimed to identify drug prevention campaigns found effective in East Asia and the Pacific; and recommended workable and practical mechanisms for evaluating drug prevention campaigns. Through the workshop, lessons were extracted to demonstrate impact of the prevention campaigns on different target groups.

One participant from each of the G69 participating countries, duly nominated by the national drug control agencies, were sponsored by UNODC through the project. A total of 22 participants from national drug control agencies from ten countries participated in the workshop.

Presentations were made by the country representatives on a best practice it has been employing for its drug prevention campaign.

Two outputs were obtained from the workshop: For the short-term output - a collection of best or promising practices on drug abuse prevention campaigns in the region. For the long-term output - inputs to the manual to be developed by the project on how to conduct drug abuse prevention campaigns which would feature a step-by-step guide in communicating information needed by campaigners in order for them to deliver and implement effective drug control public advocacy and civic awareness campaigns.



The workshop yielded the following recommendations:

1. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were recommended to be conducted by countries on their drug abuse prevention campaign strategies, if not done so. It was noted that majority of the countries have not done evaluation on their campaigns. Monitoring was done on a limited extent.
2. It was recommended that appropriate staff of national drug control agencies be trained on monitoring and evaluation on drug abuse prevention strategies. While it is ideal for evaluation to be done by an independent evaluator, national drug control agencies recognized the importance of doing internal, purposive, and conscious evaluation of their campaigns to determine effectiveness. Considering funding limitations, national drug control agencies could make quick and timely adjustments in their campaigns if they themselves do evaluations, even on a limited extent.
3. It was recommended that the UNODC Regional Centre, with the assistance of Headquarters, organize a regional training on monitoring and evaluation, after which national training sessions could be held. This recommendation was put forth initially as a request to UNODC during the deliberations.

For further information, contact Olivia Sylvia Inciong, Project Coordinator, UNODC Regional Centre, E-mail: <sylvia.inciong@unodc.org>. ■

UNODC Photos/Olivia Sylvia Inciong



Drug Abuse Prevention Campaigns

“From a general standpoint, drug prevention aims at preventing the occurrence of drug abuse within society, following the adage that ‘prevention is clearly better than cure’.

Another goal is to reduce or delay the outset of substance abuse in society as it has been shown that the risk of substance abuse generally reduces with age. Thus, if onset of addiction is delayed, the likelihood is that a person’s initiation into drug taking will be delayed.

Prevention strategies need to be formulated based on the targeting of specific risk groups. The tailoring of messages and interventions to specific needs would help to ensure greater success of programmes.

It must be recognized that even the best marketing strategy does not convince all potential buyers of a specific product. Thus in the drug prevention field too, even the best identification of risk groups will not make all potential drug takers to stop. Much also depends on the individual himself.

We need to recognize that an effective demand reduction strategy requires a balance that integrates both prevention and treatment. That said however, it is clear that without an effective prevention strategy, all drug policies are likely to fail. The internalization of social norms is perhaps the core function of prevention campaigns.

It is my hope that this workshop will enable participants to share their knowledge and experience of what would be ‘best practice’ or what works and what does not.



UNODC Photo

Evaluation of awareness programmes would also be addressed at this workshop. This is indeed timely. In Malaysia, many prevention programmes have been implemented over the years but not many have been assessed or evaluated.

Given that the end result of awareness and prevention programmes are not easily seen, stakeholders and members of society in general are quite apprehensive of the effectiveness of prevention programmes by citing the increasing numbers of persons involved in drugs which in Malaysia alone, has amounted to about 300,000 persons since 1988.”

Mr. Sabran Bin Napiah
*Director-General
National Anti-Drugs Agency
Ministry of Internal Security, Malaysia
During the Regional Workshop on Best
Practices in Drug Abuse Prevention and Campaigns
25 April 2007, Putrajaya, Malaysia*

In East Asia and the Pacific Region, national drug control agencies have been established by Governments to take the lead in drug abuse prevention and control, either in the areas of policy formulation, programme implementation or both. While the type of Governments in the region differ, drug abuse prevention campaigns are employed which are either unique to a particular country while others are commonly implemented.

The best practice workshop was held to exchange information and share experiences on the drug abuse prevention campaigns employed by national drug control agencies with the aim of obtaining better insights on the kinds of campaigns that have worked in given situations.

The discussions at the workshop were made to address past deficiencies in public communication and awareness building initiatives. As a result of the workshop,

it was unanimously agreed that national capacities by drug control agencies be enhanced; information and communication strategy be put in place, if not being done so; partnerships with private sector be explored/strengthened in support of public awareness initiatives; systematized monitoring and evaluation of public awareness campaigns and strategies be put in place; and capacities for monitoring and evaluation be developed.

Through the workshop, lessons were extracted to demonstrate impact on different target groups.

One participant from each of the participating countries in the Regional Project, “Promotion of Public Awareness on the Dangers of Drugs in East Asia” was sponsored by UNODC. A total of 22 participants from national drug control agencies of ten countries participated in the workshop, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China,



Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

A presentation was made by each country on a best practice it has been employing for its drug prevention campaign.

Discussions

At the opening programme, Mr. Sabran Bin Napih, Director-General, National Anti-Drugs Agency (NADA), Ministry of Internal Security, Malaysia, highlighted the fact that from a general standpoint, drug prevention aims at preventing the occurrence of drug abuse within the society, following the adage that “prevention is clearly better than cure.” He emphasized that without an effective prevention strategy, all drug policies are likely to fail.

To provide the framework for the workshop and other topics, Ms. Olivia Sylvia O. Inciong, Coordinator of the project, “Promotion of Public Awareness on the Dangers of Drugs in East Asia (TDRASG69)” discussed the following: building a successful prevention programme, effective drug abuse prevention campaigns, establishing and meeting drug abuse prevention goals and objectives, and monitoring and evaluation.

In her discussions, Ms. Inciong briefly highlighted the seven common steps in building a successful drug abuse prevention programme which include the following: (1) community readiness and mobilization; (2) needs assessment; (3) prioritization; (4) resource assessment; (5) focusing efforts; (6) best practices; and (7) evaluation.

In her discussions, Ms. Inciong clarified the difference between promising practices and best practices. Best practices are those strategies, activities or approaches which

have been shown through research and evaluation to be effective at prevention and/or delaying substance abuse. These are deemed research-based. These are strategies and programmes that have been shown through substantial research and evaluation to be effective.

Promising practices are programmes and strategies that have some quantitative data showing positive outcomes in delaying substance abuse over a period of time but do not have enough research or support outcomes which can be generalized.

The G69 Project Coordinator also highlighted the fact that no single best practice will be successful at preventing substance abuse in a community. To be as comprehensive as possible, best practices addressing prevention strategies in all areas of a community (family, school, individual, peer, and society/community) should be implemented. There is no single magic programme in prevention.

Country presentations

Each country representative presented a drug abuse prevention strategy which is currently implemented.

Brunei Darussalam. Mr. Tiga Bin Anam, Assistant Director, Preventive Drug Education, Narcotics Control Bureau of the Prime Minister’s Office presented the “Anti-Drug Roadshow in the Villages”, a campaign strategy being implemented in the countryside. The roadshow consists of a variety of activities within a day, implemented in a village. These activities include briefings, talks, anti-drug exhibitions, demonstration of livelihood skills, contests, and other promotions. In implementing these activities, consultative meetings with village councils were discussed earlier, media was engaged in promotions, publicity, and advertisements, private sector tapped for



sponsorships, and relevant government agencies invited as resource persons.

The road show was conceptualized to encourage the participation of village consultative councils, parents/adolescents, school children to take part in anti-drug programmes, involve government agencies in the initiative, and encourage the private sector to support the programme and the concept of a caring community. Other activities during the roadshow include contests, games, and lucky draws. Support is provided by government agencies, sponsorships by the private sector, while the consultative councils lend logistics and equipment, and the local media provide promotional and publicity support.

Aside from the roadshow, Brunei conducts talks, anti-drug exhibitions at schools and government offices, youth camps, various kinds of promotion through media and billboards, and the parent–youth movement against drug abuse.

It was highlighted that no specific evaluation was made to measure the effectiveness of the campaign. However, community response to the roadshow was encouraging based on the results of the informal survey through questionnaires.

China. Mr. Gao Wei, Deputy Director, Preventive Education Division of the National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC) made the presentation.

The Government of China has attached great importance to drug prevention and education by organizing and carrying out a series of comprehensive drug prevention and education activities. In January 2005, eleven ministries and commissions, including the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of Chinese People’s Congress, the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Education, together with the Office of NNCC, formulated the Opinions on the Implementation of Nationwide Drug Control Education, which defines the guiding principles, working system, working methodology of drug prevention and education activities: drug-free schools programme, keeping the young away from drugs programme, employees rejecting drugs activities, and “keeping my home away from drugs activities.”

The “drug-free schools programme” is a special education of drug prevention programme launched nationwide in all primary and secondary schools and aim at preventing the youngsters from drug abuse and stop them from becoming new addicts. The “keeping the young away from drugs” programme was launched in the system of youth league by NNCC together with the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League. It aims at promoting juvenile awareness through youth organizations, community-based anti-drug propaganda and education, community juvenile law schools, and community public organizations. Anti-drug volunteers are recruited and organized, mostly college students who take part in large-scale anti-drugs programmes. The “employees rejecting drugs” activities are organized jointly by NNCC and the All-China Federation of Trade Unions. Activities are mostly anti-drug propaganda and education tapping labor unions of various agencies, organizations and enterprises. The “keeping my home away from drugs” activities are also organized jointly by NNCC and the All-China Women’s Federation. Activities are aimed at implementation of anti-drug propaganda and education in families in order to strengthen the women’s role in families by helping family members, especially the youngsters to stay away from drugs.



While there has been a decrease in the number of new addicts, the developments however, do not directly link to any results conducted towards a purposive evaluation of the country’s prevention strategies.

Cambodia. Mr. Neak Yuthea, Deputy Director, Department of Legislation Education and Prevention of the National Authority for Combating Drugs made the presentation.

Mr. Yuthea highlighted the media project in Cambodia which had three main components: mobile team, radio programme, and video workshops. As a drug awareness strategy, the mobile teams presented forum theatres to raise awareness on drugs and drug-related issues. Mail boxes were also installed in schools and communities to obtain feedback directly from the youths. Monitoring on the project was regularly done, usually reflected in the progress reports of the project team. While messages about drug abuse have been conveyed to people of various economic statuses, many

Photo by NACD, Cambodia



confirmed based on the number of letters received through the mailboxes. Baseline surveys were also lacking prior to the implementation of the strategy. Thus, it was difficult to determine project impact.

No formal evaluation has been done on the media project.

Indonesia. Ms. Lucky Anzra Irvina, Prevention Support Centre Staff, National Narcotics Board (BNN) made the presentation.

The drug abuse prevention campaigns of BNN are focused on the youth with ages ranging from 11 to 34, families, and schools. Programme activities to carry out the campaigns include information provision through advocacy among decision makers and community leaders; communication through motivation and distribution of information employing all media; and education through training of national, provincial, and local leaders; and alternative development through establishment of initiatives for social-cultural behavior changes.

Photo by BNN, Indonesia



While informal surveys have been conducted, no evaluation has been put in place to evaluate the campaigns.

Lao PDR. Dr. Kham Noan Hsam Drug Demand Reduction Specialist, Programme Facilitation Unit, Lao Commission on Drug Control (LCDC) made the presentation.

The main focus of the civic awareness campaign is primary prevention, aimed at reducing drug trafficking and abuse within the community through community mobilization and enhancing the strength of the household/family. To facilitate this, a drug control structure was established from central to village levels with the Minister, who is also the Chairman of LCDC. He took it upon himself to lead the nationwide drug awareness campaign. Lao public media provided widespread coverage and broadcast special TV and radio programmes against drugs; sporting events and marches organized; information-education-communication materials developed and disseminated; village drug control units established with the counter narcotics units; local militias and police keeping drug dealers out of the neighborhoods.



Photo by LCDC, Lao PDR

Follow up and monitoring is carried out by the local communities and local government authorities with random monitoring by the central level. Monitoring and evaluation is conducted at the village, district, provincial and central levels.

Malaysia. Mr. K. Sukumaran, Director, National Anti Drugs Agency (NADA), State of Johore, Malaysia, presented the report.



UNODC Photo/Olivia Sylvia Inciong

Still on its first year of implementing the strategy of mobilizing the civil society to create drug-free communities, NADA has chosen seven key locations in the country considered to be high risk states to implement

the scheme. The “Gerak Gempur Dada Gempadah” or “Mobilizing the Community against Drugs” consists of a wide array of programmes including home visits, counseling and motivation, social activities and competitions, community-based sports, health and education programmes, cultural activities, quizzes and exhibitions. The intervention is being supported by key government ministries, NGOs, social and professional organizations, and political parties.

No system of evaluation for this program has been put in place.

Philippines. Ms. Luningning H. Gotera, Project G69 focal person, Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), presented the report.

Singapore. Ms. Hannah Wong, Deputy Head, Preventive Education Unit, Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) presented the report.

CNB launched the Anti-Drug Ambassador Scheme in 2004, targeting the upper primary and lower secondary school students. It was modeled after the Singapore Science Centre’s Questa Club Programme where students have to conduct research and complete various tasks in the activity card in order to qualify for the Questa Club badges. Since its introduction in 2005, the scheme was implemented again in 2006 and 2007.

The scheme aims to reach large student populations by targeting those who have completed a range of anti-drug activities. These activities are outlined in activity booklets required for Anti-Drug Ambassadors. Upon completion of an activity, students will attain a certain number of credits, values of which vary according to the difficulty level of the activity. After students complete the activity booklet, they are either awarded with gold, silver, or bronze collar pins.

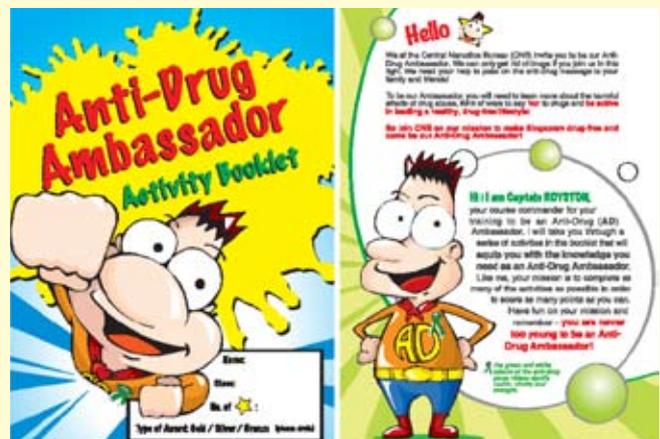
After two months of project implementation, feedback was obtained via email from the teachers of the participating schools. Many teachers felt that the activities were suitable for students of varying abilities and provided a good platform for parents’ involvement. CNB also received feedback from students who shared that they had enjoyed the activities.



Photo by DDB, Philippines

For the past 34 years, the Philippines celebrates nationwide the Drug Abuse Prevention and Control (DAPC) Week every third week of November. While leaders of the Philippine Government have changed over time, DAPC has been continuously celebrated and now on its 34th year. The celebration is aimed to create awareness among citizens on the national crusade against the dangers of illicit drugs and generate more active involvement and participation from different sectors such as educators and school authorities, religious groups, socio-civic organizations, medical and para-medical sector, law enforcement, judiciary, village leaders, media, labor groups, artists and entertainers, sports enthusiasts, etc., in the anti-drug abuse campaign of the government. DDB provides funding for the celebration with the support from various government agencies on a cost-sharing basis. The DAPC week is facilitated through a presidential memorandum.

The celebration has resulted in the establishment of other programmes on awareness raising about drug abuse, yet, there has been no evaluation made on the conduct of the DAPC week since it started in 1973.



Graphics by CNB, Singapore

As most of the activities catered to the general student population, they were relatively easy to complete. Some teachers commented that the activities could be made more challenging so that the students would put in more effort. With this feedback, CNB incorporated more challenging activities for 2007. For example, students were asked to write a short newspaper article and propose a school anti-drug project. The evaluation further proved that the scheme helped reinforce anti-drug messages in a fun and engaging way; and with the support of the Ministry of Education and the teachers, the project was managed and implemented with ease and success. The Ambassadors Scheme was also found to be a viable project for a country that wish to reach out to a large member of students with anti-drug messages.

Thailand. Ms. Chotiros Utsahakit, Policy and Planning Analyst, Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), presented the report.

ONCB implemented the “One Baht from One Million Hearts: Fight against Drugs” project as an initiative on the occasion of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadev’s sixtieth anniversary accession to the throne. The project started in December 2005 until March 2006. The project was initiated by the ONCB Youth Network which organizes creative activities to help Thai youths to stay away from drugs in a sustainable way by mobilizing resources within each network and expanding throughout the country.

The project was implemented nationwide in order to persuade youths to participate by contributing only one Baht (US\$ 0.03) daily to the project. Complementing the project were materials such as posters widely disseminated in educational institutions, savings boxes which can be downloaded from the ONCB website, publicity through the mass media and youth leaders, radio and press articles, spots, interviews, and partnerships with various sectors to support the project and seek their endorsements.

Graphics by ONCB, Thailand



One important feature of the project is the morale enhancement for youths by appreciating and admiring those that collected the savings and giving it to other youth groups who wish to engage in drug abuse prevention projects. A total of 1,159 educational institutions cooperated in the project nationwide.

Results of the evaluation showed that that the success of the project was beyond expectation – not only in terms of money collected but also in the value instilled in the minds of the participating parties. The project was able to raise 1,182,578.50 Baht – clearly indicating that it has exceeded its target.

Viet Nam. Ms. Tran Huong Thao, Expert, Educational Centre for Population, Health and Environment, Viet Nam Youth Union, presented the report.

Viet Nam presented its Mobile Drama Team which is being implemented by the Viet Nam Youth Union.



Photo by SODC, Viet Nam

The mobile drama team engages in cultural activities and performances that will help improve the awareness of local residents on the consequences of drug abuse. The model is especially suitable to the country’s rural areas, where public performances in the villages have always caught the attention of its local residents.

Young people and the local folks like this type of communication model as it combines drama with mobile performances including discussions, quiz contests and lucky draws. The team can build on other topics including peer education and skills development. The scheme also encourages members of peer education groups to participate in direct talks during mobile performances. Through the drama, the team has gently delivered messages, even on critical issues which had a good impact on the audience.

Its disadvantages, however, include the following: unsustainable drama team as members have high mobility; team members are not professionals in the field of drama and theatre, and thus, need to enhance capacities in script development, advocacy and community mobilization skills, communication skills, and conduct experiential sharing workshops.

For more information, contact Olivia Sylvia Inciong
Project Coordinator
E-mail: <sylvia.inciong@unodc.org> ■

Lost in the Past:

Early 1900s – An uncovered drug trafficking case

By Akira Fujino
UNODC Regional Centre

Source: Public Record Office, United Kingdom

F.		F. 3255
1923	OPIUM ... 214	8 NOV 1923
F 3255/979/87 Home Office 1,581/2 5th Nov. 1923 5th Nov. 1923 Opium	Illicit traffic in narcotic drugs Papers found in possession of Y. Miyagawa, a Japanese subject arrested by the City of London police on a charge of procuring 500 lbs of morphia for shipment to Japan, show that large illicit consignments of heroin are at present on board the steamships "Holland Maru" and "Holstein" in the China sea. It is requested that His Majesty's Ambassador at Tokyo may be instructed by telegraph to urge the Japanese Government to intercept the drugs in question.	
at Paper. J3193 (Print) 10 No 1328 - 8 NOV 1923 10 No 1428 - 10 NOV 1923 (Index) Paper. J3288	(Mention) The Report of the H.O., dated this morning, & explained that the matter was urgent, as one of the ships concerned was due to arrive in a few days at a Japanese port. He added that a fuller report would be sent later. Swift telegram arrived: & copy to Foreign, with ref. to the telegram. L. Officer November 8th	

Foreign Office file, United Kingdom, from 1923.

London, 8 November 1923, Confidential, "...on the 5th November the City of London police arrested a Japanese subject named Y. M[...] upon a charge of procuring 500 lbs muriate of morphia for the firm for that name in Kobe. The morphia in question was dispatched from Switzerland in 9 cases declared as "Tannic Acid (harmless chemicals)". A cursory examination of the many papers found in the possession of M[...] shows that the firm ...has been consistently engaged in the illicit purchase of narcotics from German and Swiss firms. ... The papers

indicate that large illicit consignments of heroin are at present on board the S.S. H[...] Maru (destination Kobe) and the S.S. H[...] (destination Taku) which are understood to be now in the China Sea." (Letter dated 8 November 1923 from the Home Office to the Foreign Office, United Kingdom)¹

On the same day, the Foreign Office sent a code telegram to the British Ambassador to Japan, requesting him to "inform Japanese government to enable them to intercept consignment of heroin and investigate proceedings of firms involved".² Another letter sent three weeks later from the Under Secretary of State, Home Office, to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office,³ refers to a note verbal sent from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the British Embassy at Berlin, received in reply to a query from the United Kingdom, concerning "the illicit traffic in the drugs carried on by certain German firms" and notes that "the recent arrest of a Japanese in London has led to discoveries directly implicating [author's note: name of a German firm] an important firm of chemical manufacturers in Germany ...in the illicit drug traffic."

It is interesting to note that the above-mentioned initial reply from the German Government said that the information provided by the British authorities had been "presumably only based on supposition" and that the statements against the German company had not been proved correct. It continued, "The firm has no factory in Hamburg ... Moreover the reputation of both firms ... is above the suspicion of engaging in illicit business".

¹ Letter reference 451, 581/2 dated 8 November 1923 from the Under Secretary of State, Home Office, to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, United Kingdom, in file FO 371/9248 63344 no.215, Public Record Office, United Kingdom.

² Telegram reference (F.3255/979/87) sent at 6:30 p.m., 8 November 1923, *ibid*.

³ Letter reference 447, 190/26, dated 28 November 1923, *ibid*.

The Home Office letter then requests that *“His Majesty’s Ambassador at Berlin may be instructed to place the content of the memoranda before the German Government and to urge the importance of searching enquiries being made by the authorities into the dealing of [the German company] ..., laying stress on the enormous scale on which the operations are being carried on and the ease with which the drugs appear to be obtained for the illicit traffic.”*⁴

It further speaks of a stern measure the Government has taken *“It would not be inopportune, perhaps, for the British Ambassador in making there representations to remind the German Government of the action taken by His Majesty’s Government this year in withdrawing the licence to manufacture and deal in the drugs from the British firm of [company name] (whose morphine was sold under the trade name of Wink), when they were discovered to be connected with the illicit traffic.”* The letter continues to note that the German company *“appear to have reaped the benefit of this action by the British Government”*, pointing out that in the code found upon the aforementioned Japanese individual said that morphine crystals could be supplied *“like Wink”*. The Secretary of State of the Home Office was quoted as saying the *“the efforts of those countries who loyally comply with the provisions of the Opium Convention 1912 will be nullified if the effect is merely to transfer the traffic the German and other manufacturers.”*⁵

The investigations conducted revealed other interesting findings, including diversified trafficking routes of the drugs diverted into illicit traffic from the same manufacturing sources, involvement of different nationals apparently linked in organized trafficking attempts, and use of sophisticated means such as a “code” adapted for their covert communication purposes. Repeated seizures made by the customs authorities in India and China were said to be linked with the same German manufacture.

The Home Office Note continues, *“It will be recollected that the Danish Government reported that the notorious drug trafficker, A. S[...], of Copenhagen purchased morphine, which was subsequently seized at Hong Kong, from [the German firm].”*

Furthermore, *“Among the documents found on [the above-mentioned Japanese national arrested] was a typewritten code ... The code used is compiled from the supplement to Bentley’s Commercial code. There can be little doubt that this typewritten code was sent ... by [the German] firm, for ... a portion of a torn typewritten letter found in [the Japanese national’s] waste-paper basket, referring to “my private code”, is identical as regards character of paper and typing with other fragments of [the German company’s] headed notepaper found with it, and is also exactly similar in shape to several of fragments, showing that they form portions of the same letter, ...”*⁶

Findings of the investigation reveals such attempts to divert licitly produced drugs into illicit traffic were in large scale and highly sophisticated. The Home Office Note continues, *“From the code itself it is to be seen that transactions, in very large quantities of heroin, morphine and cocaine (particularly of heroin) were contemplate^d; the only other drug mentioned are those which are customarily employed by drug traffickers for purposes of smuggling narcotics, i.e. boric acid, milk sugar and salicylic acid; (Note, the phrase WYBFO is given as a code word for a drug of the name “Mocetan”. A small bottle labeled “Mocetan” was found in the possession of [the above Japanese national] on his arrest in London and on being analysed was found to be morphine hydrochloride). It is reasonable to assume from the nature of the code that the person who drafted it is no novice to the smuggling of narcotics.”*⁷

Such was the situation in early 1900’s, when universal application of the first international drug control treaty, the Opium Convention of 1912, had not been achieved. Drug law enforcement agencies faced international networks of drug traffickers, often organized crime groups, in international investigations, and their findings gradually led to the development of a series of binding international treaties on drug control as we see today.

Author’s note: *Texts in italics are reproduced verbatim. Names of individuals are withheld.*

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

VISION STATEMENT

UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific

FIRST CHOICE

All partners, governmental, inter-governmental, non-governmental or otherwise, turn to the Regional Centre as the first choice in the region for advice on international norms and standards, and for requesting or providing technical assistance, in drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice, and terrorism prevention, pursuant to relevant international treaties.

VISIBLE AND RELEVANT

Making a difference: The Regional Centre is visible throughout the region, and seen as making tangible differences, by taking an issue- and result-oriented approach in providing technical assistance to address justice and security issues, thus donors and recipient partners in the region wanting to partner with UNODC.

SUBSTANTIVE EXPANSION

Fully employing the cross-sector linkages in drug, crime and terrorism issues, and using its comparative advantages in being able to reach out to all types of partners, the Regional Centre has a thorough and balanced programme, for both normative and technical assistance activities, addressing drug supply and demand reduction, HIV, transnational organized crime, corruption, money laundering, human trafficking and people smuggling, and terrorism.

GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION

Building on existing regional mechanisms, the Regional Centre has a thorough coverage of the entire East Asia and the Pacific region in carrying out its programme of activities, extending it further to cross-regional collaboration with other regions of the world.

PORTFOLIO INCREASE

First doubling the existing portfolio as at 2007, the Regional Centre steadily increases the portfolio, by substantive and geographical expansion of its activities throughout the East Asia and the Pacific region, also establishing new footholds of its physical presence.

For more information, contact:
UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific
3rd Fl., B Block, United Nations Building
Raj Damnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok, Thailand
Tel: (+66-2) 288-2100, Fax: (+66-2) 281-2129
E-mail: fo.thailand@unodc.org | Website: www.unodc.un.or.th