



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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**“Community Policing: Its role in ensuring  
a protective environment for our children  
from sexual predators”**

**Remarks**

**Introductory Training for Community Policing Officers and  
Community Leaders**

**Project Childhood (Protection Pillar: Thailand)**

**by**

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Sawadee Khrub and Good Morning to all.

- Police Lieutenant General Pongpat Chayapan, Commissioner of the Central Investigation Bureau,
- Deputy Commissioners from the Central Investigation Bureau,
- Community Policing Officers and Community Leaders,
- Distinguished partners,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'd like to start by welcoming all those Community Policing Officers – from all over Thailand, 120 in number – and the 80 Community Leaders, also from Thailand – to this event. I would like to recognize in the audience all the Commanders of the Specialist Divisions of the CIB – your presence here this morning shows the seriousness which the Royal Thai Police gives to community policing.

I would also like to welcome – to Thailand, the Land of Smiles – our colleagues from the Cambodian Police and the Vietnamese Police. Thank you for traveling all the way here to share your knowledge and experience, and to demonstrate your commitment to our common goal.

I am delighted to be here this morning to share experiences and knowledge on the importance of *Community Policing*. My purpose is to show how important community policing is to stop child sexual exploitation.

### ***Community Policing***

- I would like to offer 3 reasons why community policing is so important.
  - First, it is policing at a local level – meeting the needs of communities.
  - Second, and for this reason, it puts the needs of the community **at the heart** of what the police do – on the ground.
  - Third, community policing therefore signifies a shift from traditional policing.
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- Let me take this opportunity to thank **General Pongpat** for speaking – in October, here in Bangkok – at one of our events for police officers from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam.

- When we listened to him speak, we learned that the issues faced by community policing officers in Thailand vary in type – and in intensity – from community to community.
- It is essential to know what we are up against. This is why, before we started Project Childhood, we did some research in the areas the project would touch. This research showed that the following crimes were of greatest concern in our communities here in Thailand:
  - drugs,
  - family violence,
  - violence against women,
  - child sexual exploitation,
  - violence against children,
  - human trafficking
 This is just to name a few. But these are the key worries for the community members.

Making our communities – and our children – safe from these threats, means that we have to engage, all of us, in making it better. So how can community policing help?

### **Why Community Policing?**

- Community policing means that the police and community must become partners. It adds to – but does not replace – traditional policing.
- Police Officers and Community Members must work together to develop solutions to problems. The result, most importantly, will be that Community Policing – when implemented well – will increase **trust** in the police to solve crimes. It creates the bond which will allow people to share information which police can use to stop criminals from victimizing our children.

### ***The importance of working together – Police and Community***

- You will recall that from the survey I mentioned, Thai communities say they are worried about
  - child sexual exploitation, and

- violence against children.
- My key message today is that we must create a '**Protective Environment**' for our children. This minimizes the risk that they will be exploited or abused.
- Together with the Family, the Police are a key element in this protective environment. But the Police cannot work in isolation. They need the support of the community.
- You, as Police Officers, need to constantly **reach out** – as uniformed citizens – to your community leaders and your community members.
- The training we will share during this event will help you to do this better.
- It draws upon the lessons we have learnt over many years from experts working in many organizations – especially the **Australian Federal Police, UNICEF, Step Ahead, Friends International and ChildLine**.
- The training will introduce you to concepts that will leave you better prepared with knowledge to be able to identify and respond to criminal cases affecting your communities.

### ***Project Childhood***

- My team has developed this training agenda jointly with the Highway Police of the Royal Thai Police. The joint agenda will cover the key issues under the broad umbrella of:
  - child protection,
  - children's rights and
  - community strength.
- This training is being organized as a part of Project Childhood.
- Project Childhood – as you heard yesterday – is one of the countermeasures which has been developed in our region to stop child sex tourism.

- UNODC is proud to be the primary implementing agency of the Protection Pillar of this project. This initiative is funded by the **Government of Australia**, specifically **AusAID**. I would like to recognize in the audience this morning, Ms. Amber Parks, and, through her, to thank the Government of Australia for its support. The project supports the work of law enforcement officials to bring travelling child sex offenders to justice in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. In this we cooperate closely with **Interpol** in an innovative way.
- We are also pleased to be working in partnership with World Vision – who delivered the training yesterday – and is the implementing agency responsible for Project Childhood’s Prevention Pillar. This pillar is working to strengthen the protective environment for children in the travel and tourism industries.
- Together our aim is to raise awareness about the prevention of child sexual abuse in communities.

### ***Conclusion***

- In concluding I would like to acknowledge the participation of colleagues from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam – which are the other countries involved in our project.
- Your presence demonstrates strong commitment and interest in community policing – as well as working across borders to stamp out the evil of child sex exploitation.
- To all the officers who will participate in this training, I encourage you to make the most of this opportunity to both learn and to network with your sister and brother officers.
- Together we can pave the way forward to create a safe environment for our children – both in Thailand – and the region.

Thank you all.