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**Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law
Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific**
Bangkok, 10 – 13 February 2009
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
**Major regional drug-trafficking trends and
countermeasures**

Regional and subregional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific **

I. Introduction

1. South Asia has been frequently used as a transit hub for the illicit trafficking of heroin originating in Afghanistan. In addition, there have been well established and traditional trafficking routes used for the diversion of acetic anhydride (a key precursor chemical for the manufacture of heroin) from the region, destined for Afghanistan. One of the main obstacles in the fight against illicit drug trafficking has been the differing that drug law enforcement regimes across the region and the insufficiently coordinated and integrated approach. While the Paris Pact initiative has strengthened the capacity of Afghanistan and its immediate neighbouring countries to address drug trafficking, it needs to take into account the needs of other countries in South-East Asia, as appropriate. There is a need for drug law enforcement agencies in the region to better understand the evolution of the drug problem and its trends and links to international organized crime and to interact more with regional and international partners to counter the drug problem.

2. Trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) and their precursor chemicals in South Asia has been increasing and a large market has emerged in the region, as shown by the number of seizures made in recent years. South-Asian countries are being used as transit points between manufacturing hubs in East Asia and the growing illicit markets in the Middle East. In addition, the widespread availability of ATS may contribute to an increase in the abuse of such substances in South Asia. South-East Asia is a major ATS producing and consuming region and South Asia is considered to be one of the largest manufacturers and exporters of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine (key precursor chemicals for the manufacture of ATS). There are traditional precursor trafficking routes from India to Myanmar and seizures of these precursors have been reported in South-East Asia. Due to this increasing problem, there is therefore a need to strengthen drug control and reinforce precursor control mechanisms in the region.

3. The use of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) Pre-Export Notification (PEN) system, supported by over 90 countries and territories, has significantly contributed

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to preventing the diversion of several tons of precursors listed in the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The PEN online system has greatly facilitated the rapid exchange of information on shipments to prevent diversion of precursor chemicals in international trade. INCB has urged the Governments of all importing and exporting countries that have not yet registered to use this online system to do so. Despite such efforts, Governments in Asia continue to face difficulties in handling the diversion of substances used in the illicit manufacture of heroin and cocaine. Drug law enforcement agencies need to be aware that better border control is needed in the region in order to avoid smuggling from licit trade channels across the borders.

4. A recent increase in seizures of ATS, mostly methamphetamine, originating in China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, with Indonesia as final destination, has been reported. In two separate incidents, ten kilograms of methamphetamine were seized by the Customs officers of Hong Kong SAR of China in 2007. Six kilograms of methamphetamine were seized from a vehicle at Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong SAR of China; another four kilograms were seized from a passenger arriving from Guangzhou, China and destined to Indonesia at Hong Kong International Airport. In addition, Customs authorities from the Hong Kong SAR of China have reported a series of seizures involving mostly methamphetamine and MDMA at the international airport. Furthermore, a clandestine laboratory illicitly producing amphetamine and MDMA on a large scale was dismantled by the Australian authorities.

5. Although the Governments of countries in Asia have not reported any significant seizures of potassium permanganate (a substance used in the illicit manufacture of cocaine), the authorities of China and Singapore suspended shipments totalling 92 tons which had been ordered by non-authorized companies in Kazakhstan and Malaysia. In Afghanistan, potential opium production increased from 6,100 tons in 2006 to 8,200 tons in 2007. In 2007, an unprecedented order for a shipment of 80 tons of acetic anhydride destined for Afghanistan was stopped by China. There is a need for Governments in Asia to revise and strengthen their controls over the movement of acetic anhydride within their territories, as appropriate, with a view to assisting Afghanistan in intercepting illicit shipments of this substance, of which Afghanistan has no legitimate requirements.

6. Although law enforcement authorities in India regularly eradicate areas illegally cultivated with cannabis, a significant amount still finds its way into the domestic market. In 2007, about 700 acres of cannabis were destroyed, and seizures of cannabis herb in India have averaged about 150 tons over the three year period between 2004 and 2006; however, around 108 tons were reported for 2007. Since 2003, annual seizures of cannabis resin have been averaged around 4 tons in India.

7. In Nepal, besides the demand on the domestic market, cannabis resin is smuggled from Nepal to other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Seizures of this substance have been also regularly reported in India, Thailand, Japan, China and the Hong Kong SAR of China. In addition, the increasing drug use in Viet Nam has been supported by the influx of illicit drugs smuggled into the country from the neighbouring countries. While increasing ATS use is a concern, heroin is still the major drug abused, and it is largely injected. Furthermore, injecting drug use has also been a major factor contributing to the rapid increase of HIV. Consequently, drug dependence through evidence-based measures, as well as the strengthening of access to and improvement of the quality of social and protection services, especially at grassroots level, need to be carefully addressed by the countries of the region, as appropriate, in order to effectively address the drug problem.

8. A large laboratory was discovered in the southern island of Mindanao, Philippines that reportedly had a 1,000 kilograms monthly production capacity of crystalline methamphetamine. The operation was reportedly run by an international drug syndicate for an extended period of time and it was believed that some of the finished product was exported to Malaysia. The Philippines authorities identified the Subic Bay Freeport in Zambales northwest of Manila as a transshipment point for illicit drugs from several countries in Asia, after authorities successfully intercepted and seized 745 kilograms of crystalline methamphetamine. The authorities also seized chemicals and equipment that could produce at least 180,000 kilograms of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) in a farming village in Naguilian, La Union.
9. The Malaysian police dismantled a drug laboratory and seized 260 kilograms of drugs worth RM44 million. The Australian Customs and police reported they had seized 4.4 tonnes of ecstasy tablets worth nearly 400 million dollars.
10. The opiate seizure trend in Myanmar is changing during the last three years. For two years in a row, in 2006 and 2007, the Myanmar government reported low seizure of heroin (No. 4) but reported very high seizure of morphine (also called heroin No. 3).
11. As at 9 September 2008, 183 States had either ratified, acceded to or approved the 1988 UN Convention. The rates of adherence by region indicate that Oceania was represented by only 54 per cent, a low percentage when compared to other regions (Africa, 94 per cent; the Americas, 100 per cent, Asia, 98 per cent and Europe, 98 per cent).

II. International Cooperation

12. In the framework of Project Prism, an international initiative to address diversion of precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of ATS, after a request by the Project Prism Task Force in 2005, a large scale-regional survey of safrole-rich oils was conducted by the UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific. The results of this survey showed that Cambodia, China, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar were the major producers of safrole-rich oils (1,500 tons produced annually), and that shipments of safrole in the form of safrole-rich oils were often declared as "essential oils", which made it difficult for authorities to identify individual shipments. South-East Asia consumed most of such substances. The results of this survey are expected to assist countries of the region to develop and strengthen regional mechanisms to prevent diversion of safrole-rich oils. In addition, Australia seized 50 litres of safrole originated in South Africa, Thailand and the United States in 2007.
13. To further interagency cooperation, a joint United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNODC supervisory mission was conducted in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 2007. The mission assisted in mapping out areas where joint synergies, cost efficiency and effectiveness could be achieved. Best practices were also shared for local adaptation and application. In addition, based on a Memorandum of Understanding on international cooperation between UNODC and UNIDO signed in 2005, a joint project for Laos was developed building on the mandates of each organization. This pilot project demonstrated how a joint UN project could complement efforts on an international basis, increase coherence and cost efficiency towards greater aid effectiveness by utilizing the comparative advantages of certain UN specialized agencies working closely with the host Government and grass root communities. It brings a novel approach to alternative development by combining UNODC's expertise in community-based

development and drug control with UNIDO's expertise on economic development aspects including production, processing and marketing of agro-products.

14. In September 2008, about 170 prosecutors and drug experts from 21 countries in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe gathered for a two-day Anti-Drug Liaison Officials' Meeting for International Cooperation (ADLOMICO) in Busan, South Korea, to discuss cross-border measures to curb rising online drug trade, with growing Internet use. One of the key proposals of the meeting was for the participating countries to establish a common Internet server to exchange information on drug-related crimes and seek help in arresting escapees. There are currently three such profiling programs created by the UNODC, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and the Government of Japan.

A. Regional conferences and meetings on drug control

15. 16. The first "World Forum Against Drugs" (WFAD) was hosted by Sweden from 8 to 10 September 2008 in Stockholm. It was attended by more than 600 participants, including UNODC, representing 82 countries. A final WFDA Declaration, guided by the UN drug control Conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the resolution resulting from the 1998 United Nations General Assembly Twentieth Special Session (UNGASS) meeting, was signed by eleven organizations. The signing of the Declaration also marked the start of a global network of organizations united behind the UN Conventions. This global forum was the first of its kind at which NGOs, treatment centres, academics, municipal and regional authorities, politicians and other decision-makers, private individuals, the business community and others from around the world met to express ideas and share experiences about how to work successfully against illicit drugs.

16. The sixth Asian Youth Congress, organized by the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (CPDAP), was held from 4 to 7 August 2008 in Bali, Indonesia. The meeting created a forum for young leaders from Asia to learn from their peers about drug abuse prevention. Participants shared information about peer-led activities to reduce drug abuse in schools and campuses and worked together on identifying community-based strategies to address drug use problems among youth. The CPDAP, launched in 1973, represents the first regional programme to address the drug abuse problem in the Asia-Pacific region.

17. Heads of State of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka met at the 15th Summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) held from 2 to 3 August 2008 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. They recognized the growing linkages between terrorism, illegal trafficking in narcotic and psychotropic substances, illegal trafficking of persons and firearms and underscored the need to address the problem in a comprehensive manner. The Heads of State or Government further emphasized the importance of completing all legislative and other relevant measures to implement within Member States the provisions of the Regional Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

18. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) met from 17 to 24 July 2008 in Shangri-la, Singapore and produced a Statement Promoting Collaboration on the Prevention of Diversion of Precursors into Illicit Drug Manufacture. The meeting urged competent national authorities of ARF participants to work in cooperation with each other and with existing mechanisms to strengthen the control of precursors to illicit drug manufacture, including: the INCB and the UNODC Regional

Centre for East Asia and the Pacific. It also called upon ARF participants to promote the objectives of the Asian Collaborative Group (ACoG), in particular to identify opportunities for cooperation and support for building capacity in the region to respond to the threats of diversion of precursors into illicit drug manufacture. The meeting also decided to promote collaboration among ARF participants on activities implemented by existing mechanisms including the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD).

19. The “Beyond 2008” international NGO Forum organized by the NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs in partnership with UNODC was held from 7 to 9 July 2008 in Vienna, Austria. The Forum involving over 500 NGOs from 116 countries and 65 international NGOs represented the final step in the global NGO’s contribution to the review of the 1998-2008 UNGASS. Building on thirteen regional consultations and online questionnaires, the Forum adopted by consensus a Declaration and three related Resolutions. Three key themes have emerged from the deliberations: shared responsibility and accountability, giving the most affected a voice, and a call for action that will be tabled for consideration by member states at the forthcoming high-level segment of the CND taking place in March 2009.

20. Interpol’s 20th Asian Regional Conference was held from 5 to 7 March 2008 in Hong Kong SAR of China and called for more regional action and increased use of INTERPOL tools and services to combat transnational crime, including terrorism and child sex tourism. Delegates from 32 countries throughout Asia, the South Pacific and the Middle East recommended that Interpol’s member countries undertake regional operations and make more efficient use of Interpol notices and databases, particularly in efforts to trace and apprehend child sex offenders. The meeting called for National Central Bureau (NCBs) in the Asian region to encourage national law enforcement agencies to regularly consult and update Interpol databases and extend their use to border police, investigative units, and customs and intelligence agencies. Participants concluded that, thanks to close and coordinated international police cooperation between Interpol and law enforcement officers in Asia in identifying, locating and arresting these suspected dangerous international criminals, arrests such of the world’s most hunted alleged child sexual offender, Christopher Paul Neil, in Thailand, were able to take place.

21. UNODC convened the first Expert Meeting on the Global Synthetics Monitoring Analyses, Reporting and Trends (SMART) Programme from 18 to 19 February 2008 in Tokyo, Japan. Participants from Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Kuwait, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, the United States, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and the Organization of American States (OAS) attended the meeting. The Global SMART Programme will enhance the capacity of Member States and authorities in priority regions to generate, manage, analyse and report information on synthetic drugs and apply their knowledge in designing policy and programme interventions. The SMART Programme will have its core operations starting in UNODC Headquarters in Vienna and regional teams in East Asia and the Pacific, and spread to other regions including South Asia, the Gulf States, Northern and Southern Africa and the Americas. There is a need for Governments, as appropriate, to address in a more coordinated manner the abuse, trafficking and production of synthetic drugs, which represent one of the most concerning problems worldwide, with the abuse of ATS estimated to exceed that of heroin and cocaine combined. Governments and drug law enforcement agencies are encouraged, as appropriate, to consider the creation of a coordinated global mechanism to monitor illicit synthetic drugs which could be similar

to the Illicit Crop Monitoring Programme (ICMP) of UNODC. The Global SMART Programme was officially launched on 9 September 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand, by the Executive Director of UNODC, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, with the support of the UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific.

22. The Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs held its 43rd session in Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of), in November 2008. Representatives from the 18 member countries and observers from Europe attended the meeting. Participants discussed regional and sub-regional efforts to tackle the problem of drug trafficking in the region. Governments attending were encouraged to engage in law enforcement operations to counter production and trafficking of cannabis, to support partnerships between law enforcement authorities and community-based organizations in implementing demand reduction strategies and to facilitate international law enforcement initiatives focusing on both illicit drugs and precursors.

23. The UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific hosted the Regional Amphetamine-Type Stimulants Forum from 29 to 31 August 2007 in Manila, the Philippines. Senior representatives of national drug control agencies of ASEAN member States and China, the ASEAN Secretariat, ICPO-INTERPOL, WHO and the Australian National Council on Drugs, including the Embassies of Australia, Canada, Finland, France and the United States attended the meeting. The primary goal of the Forum was to provide future options for supply and demand responses to ATS in East Asia. The meeting made the following recommendations, inter alia: raising of national capacities by the provision of field-test kits for drug identification, sharing of border seizure information via existing and expanding mechanisms on a systematic basis and development of a standard form to be used by national drug agencies for disaggregated treatment data, and conduct of impact studies on existing treatment and demand reduction programmes to develop mechanisms to better integrate their results into national policies.

24. The Mini Dublin Group, consisting of 8 Ambassadors and Senior Representatives from 14 Embassies and the UN, visited the Joint LAO/UNODC/UNIDO Project for Social and Economic Rehabilitation of Former Opium Poppy Growing Communities, from 28 February to 1 March 2008 in Oudomxay Province, Laos. The project is considered as the first of a series designed to support the National Programme Strategy for the post opium scenario to sustain opium elimination and reduce poverty. It is also one of the first joint UN projects to be implemented in Laos after the Vientiane Declaration on aid effectiveness in December 2006. In addition, UNODC organized, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Lao National Commission for Drug Control and Supervision (LCDC), a training on "Financial Investigation Techniques" from 8 to 12 September 2008, in Vientiane, Laos. The meeting was the first of a series of training courses in Laos designed to assist the Government to strengthen its law enforcement institutions and aimed at developing law enforcement officials' knowledge and skills in financial investigations, including money laundering. Furthermore, a three-day workshop, which took place from 3 to 5 September 2008 in Vientiane, was organized by UNODC and LCDC to discuss the Laos National Drug Control Master Plan 2009-2013 to help the country eliminate drug abuse by 2015. The main aspects of the Plan consist of, inter alia, enhancing cooperation with international organisations, analysing and evaluating drug trends and risks as well as reducing the need for drug consumption.

25. In October 2007, ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters met to review the report on "Drug-Free ASEAN 2015: Status and Recommendations". Selected recommendations

from the report were endorsed at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Organised Crime in November 2007 in Brunei Darussalam. This report highlighted the growing cooperation between the ASEAN Secretariat and UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific. This not only foster linkages between various ongoing drug control frameworks in the region but also ensures closer collaboration between ASEAN and UNODC in the delivery of technical assistance, capacity building initiatives and expert advice.

26. The ASEAN Ministers overseeing the issues of transnational crime, gathered on 6 November 2007 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, to strengthen their commitment to enhance cooperation on combating transnational crime. The meeting agreed to strengthen the existing networking of law enforcement agencies and facilitate further cooperation and coordination through the establishment of a dedicated national focal point in each ASEAN member country. In this respect, hotline networks among designated Senior Officials were established. The meeting also recognized the need to build up capacity and equipment for law enforcement officers and called for provision of trainings in investigation technique and intensive English language.

27. In November 2007, immediately following the HONLEA meeting in Bangkok, the 4th Regional Joint Actions Against ATS-related Crimes Meeting was organized in the framework of the project "Regional Mechanism to execute and monitor the ACCORD Plan of Action". Participants at the meeting were informed about a number of transnational syndicates operating in the region, with a focus on movements between countries. It was decided to hold meetings at least once a year back-to-back with other appropriate regional law enforcement gatherings such as HONLEA or the ACCORD Law Enforcement Task Force meeting. Smaller meetings among concerned countries could be held for in-depth planning purposes throughout the year as needed. A number of lists were compiled for future actions including fugitives, syndicates and targets for intelligence exchange and joint operations.

28. The Senior Officials Committee Meeting of the MOU Signatories¹ (not clear which MOU) met from 11 to 13 June 2008 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. In the field of law enforcement, the UNODC Regional Centre in Bangkok is currently implementing three projects under the framework of the MOU which included the projects on precursor chemicals control and cross border liaison office mechanisms. Four more projects were presented, including on strengthening of intelligence and information sharing and supporting regional joint activities against ATS-related crime.

29. The 7th Meeting of ACCORD² Task Force III on Law Enforcement was held from 17 to 18 July 2008 in Makati City, the Philippines. Member States shared concerns over the illegal activities of drug syndicates in the region, their trafficking routes, and modus operandi. The Meeting reported that the Golden Triangle had seen a sharp decline in opium production, but an alarming rise in ATS production. ATS is flowing out of the region, while the chemicals are flowing in from China and other neighbouring countries. Member States agreed to focus on establishing an intelligence sharing mechanism by using the existing one within the ACCORD Framework.

30. The 29th Meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on Drugs Matter (ASOD) was held from 24 to 26 August 2008 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. Over 100

¹ Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and UNODC

² ACCORD: ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in response to Dangerous Drugs

participants from ASEAN, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), IFNGO³, Interpol and UNODC attended. The meeting noted the significant reduction of opiate-based drug abuse and production, while, at the same time, there was a rapid emergence of manufacture, trafficking and abuse of ATS. The meeting also raised concerns on the use of ketamine as well as the diversion of chemicals to manufacture ATS. Thailand informed the meeting about the recent trend in the diversion of pseudo-ephedrine extracted from licit medicinal products such as anti-flu tablets. Large amounts of medicine containing pseudo-ephedrine had been seized in Australia and Myanmar and the shipment were traced to Thailand. To address this issue, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of Thailand has conducted meetings with various pharmaceutical companies and relevant government agencies to raise their awareness in preventing mass purchases of such medicinal products for export.

31. At that meeting, the West African syndicates, which have been operating in the region and using local women as drug mules were also discussed. Thailand informed the meeting that the Procedures for Narcotics Cases Act (2007), covering controlled delivery and undercover operations, was recently enacted. Other than Thailand, the other member countries with similar laws are Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines. Indonesia signed an MOU with the Nigerian authorities to cooperate with Indonesia in exchange of information. For example, Nigerian nationals would need a recommendation from the Nigerian Narcotic Board before Indonesian visas could be issued.

B. Cooperation between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the governments of the region

32. As an example of coordinated efforts and close cooperation between the UNODC Country Office in Viet Nam and the Vietnamese Government, Viet Nam is now working with various UN organizations under the framework of the “One UN” initiative to address the drug problems of the country. The Government of Viet Nam has requested the United Nations to be selected as a pilot country for reforming the UN. In July 2008, that Country Office signed the “One Plan” for 2006-2010 involving 14 UN organizations (FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNODC, UNV and WHO) and the Government. The “One Plan” builds on the key components of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and country programmes as well as action plans of the participating UN organizations. The Plan presents the development challenges, the programme outcomes, outputs and expected results, implementing strategies, management responsibilities, and commitments of the Government and the participating UN organizations.

33. The UNODC in Viet Nam has established relations with the Government, in support of national priorities, especially through the provision of impartial policy advice and technical support, targeting more sensitive areas and bringing technical expertise based on international best practices, knowledge and network, and focusing on quality of growth and attention to vulnerable groups. For example, the “One UN Pilot” initiative in the country is being carried out in cooperation with the host government and various UN organizations. UNODC has provided technical support in the field of HIV prevention, treatment and care to the development and completion of: national programmes of action on HIV behaviour

³ IFNGO: International Federation of Non-Government Organisations for the Prevention of Drugs and Substance Abuse

and HIV harm reduction, a national strategy on condom promotion for HIV prevention, and national guidelines on needle syringe programming and methadone maintenance therapy. UNODC has also established partnerships with the Government of Viet Nam through various Ministries in the fields of drug law enforcement, anti-human trafficking and migrant smuggling, alternative development for replacement of opium poppy, anti-money laundering, domestic violence, HIV prevention in prison settings, drug treatment and rehabilitation, drug-related harm reduction, licit drugs and precursor control. Several ongoing projects have been carried out in cooperation with the Government, such as “Drug abuse and HIV prevention among ethnic minorities in Northwest Viet Nam”, approved and signed on 30 November 2007 by the Government.

34. In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, a new drug law was promulgated in early 2008. The new law strengthens the capacity of the Lao National Commission for Drug Control and Supervision. However, there remains a need to strengthen the overall capacity of the Government, given the lack of legislative, financial and technical capabilities to address the threats of illicit drugs, transnational organized crime, money laundering, corruption and human trafficking. In addition, drug-related petty crime has seen an exponential increase of over 100 per cent in the last year in the country. During the recent months, West African traffickers have used Vientiane as a hub for illicit drug trafficking. In terms of cooperation with the Government, UNODC has been instrumental in supporting the Government’s efforts against illicit drug trafficking. In support of the 1998 UNGASS resolution, the Lao Government adopted the national programme strategy “The Balanced Approach to Opium Elimination, 2000-2006”. The Lao Government, with the support of UNODC, launched the national programme strategy for the post opium scenario 2006-2009 as an essential assistance programme. Despite such efforts, opium elimination remains a delicate issue for Laos: it is estimated that over 1000 former opium producing villages could revert back to opium due to lack of alternatives and job opportunities. UNODC has also broadened its assistance by developing new partnerships with the Ministry of Justice, the Prosecutors Office, the Supreme Court, and the National anti corruption body (GIA), along with the Ministry of Public Security. UNODC has thus provided technical assistance and legal advice to the Government of Laos in the formulation of national legislation.

35. In 2008, the Government of Laos is developing a new comprehensive drug control master plan for the period 2009-2013 to address both existing and emerging new threats posed by drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. Furthermore, the Minister to the President’s Office and Chair of the National Commission for Drug Control and Supervision, Mr. Soubanh Srithirath, together with UNODC Executive Director, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, and UNIDO Director General, Mr. Kandeh Yumkella, agreed to a joint commitment to further support alternative and economic development of former opium poppy growing communities in Laos through the expansion of joint Lao and UN cooperation.

36. During 2007, the UNODC Country Office in Laos developed partnerships on a regional basis with the Governments of Germany, Japan, Norway and the United States, and international organizations such as the Singapore International Foundation, the Asia Development Bank, INGO Friendship International, and UNIDO. The areas of international cooperation included, inter alia: assistance to sustain opium elimination and poverty reduction for 10,000 farmers, technical assistance to develop psychosocial drug rehabilitation treatment, complementary alternative livelihoods initiatives, drug awareness and prevention campaigns amongst street kids, grassroots development assistance and construction of drug treatment facilities, health clinics, bridges and rural tracks, as well as a

joint programme funded by the UN Human Security Trust Fund and joint trainings for officials from drug control task force committees.

37. The UNODC Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) Regional Programme for the period 2008-2011 was finalized in May 2008. The Programme serves as a strategic management tool for UNODC as it was drawn up in consultation with the Governments and civil society partners in the countries served by ROSA (India, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka). It focuses on the priority problems identified through a gap analysis of the human security challenges related to drugs, crime and terrorism in the region, in a South Asia Regional Profile. ROSA considers regional bodies like SAARC as important regional players. Therefore, the Office has sought to develop a partnership with these bodies in areas of mutual interest. Building on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that SAARC had signed with UNODC, a concept paper on areas of cooperation in drug-related matters has been proposed to the SAARC Secretariat. In the field of drug law enforcement, UNODC ROSA is presently implementing three projects on drug supply control in the region, out of which two are on precursor chemical control. A drug law enforcement project is also under implementation for the region in cooperation with the Government of India. Furthermore, ROSA is implementing two ongoing regional programmes on prevention of HIV among injecting drug users (IDUs), covering seven countries (including Pakistan) and HIV prevention in prison settings in six countries. In the field of anti-human trafficking (AHT) the Governments in the region, especially the Government of India, have been fully supportive and partnered with UNODC in its AHT initiatives.

38. The core area for the present programming of UNODC ROSA is in the field of rule of law, with emphasis on effective implementation and ratification of Conventions and Protocols on Transnational Organized Crime, UNCAC and on terrorism. Towards this objective, the current focus is on capacity building in the areas of drug law enforcement and anti-human trafficking. UNODC ROSA is also cooperating actively with the police, as well as the civil society in the region. UNODC ROSA conducted a one-day workshop on networking and integration of forensic laboratories in the region in which policy makers and lab chemists participated. There was a broad consensus on sharing of drug and precursor-related forensic information among countries of South Asia, with a view to assisting law enforcement in backtracking investigations for ascertaining the source of the seized drugs and precursors. The agreement on networking and integration of laboratories has the potential to strengthen drug law enforcement in the region.

39. UNODC has organised a Computer Based Training (CBT) programme on precursor chemicals for about 300 law enforcement personnel in the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh (one session each) and India (five sessions) in 2007. Intensive training programme on precursor chemicals including a CBT module has been carried out in Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh and India (3 programmes) in 2008, where a total of 230 law enforcement personnel have been trained.

40. In Myanmar, the UNODC Country Office has established a close relationship with the Government and in particular, the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC), which resulted in UNODC being able to target more sensitive areas and provide technical support, training activities such as HIV prevention and harm reduction within prisons settings. An important activity was the UNODC/CCDAC Joint Assessment concerning law enforcement, HIV and drug use, which analyzed the involvement of the law enforcement sector in Myanmar's national response against HIV/AIDS. The assessment identified gaps and opportunities for further developing the response and recommended

strategies and technical assistance which could be developed on the current situation and strengthen the synergies between law enforcement and other sectors. UNODC has also established partnerships with various ministries of the Government of Myanmar in the fields of illicit crop monitoring, alternative development, drug treatment and rehabilitation, and drug-related harm reduction. Several ongoing projects have been carried out in cooperation with the Government such as a project on Drug Control and Development in the Wa Region of the Shan State; on Reducing Injecting Drug Use and its Harmful Consequences in the Union of Myanmar; on HIV Prevention for Police Force in Myanmar; on UNODC Partnership for the reducing of injecting drug use, HIV/AIDS and Related Vulnerability in Myanmar; and on Reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS among drug users through HAARP Country Flexible Programme for Myanmar. In 2008, a sustainable livelihoods project on drug control through alternative sustainable livelihoods in ten villages in Pinlaung Township, Southern Shan State, was launched.
