

**Remarks of Yury Fedotov, Executive Director
UNODC, at the 22nd Anti-Drug Liaison Officials'
Meeting for International Cooperation Delivered by
Regional Representative Regional Centre for East
Asia and the Pacific**

Busan, Korea, 12 September 2012

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ahn nyung ha seyo – and good morning.

Sound law enforcement and effective prosecutions are essential elements for successful international drug control.

This is why an annual event such as the Anti-Drug Liaison Officials' Meeting for International Cooperation assumes such a large degree of importance in the drug law enforcement calendar of Asia.

We see ADLOMICO as an important event and a great opportunity for the international community of drug law enforcement officers and prosecutors to share experiences, as well as reinforce a common

understanding and agree on joint action on drug control.

So please allow me to congratulate the Korean Supreme Prosecutors' Office on this remarkable – and consistent – achievement over the past 22 years.

Although the Korean SPO promotes collaboration across a range of “rule of law” issues, the ADLOMICO focuses specifically on drug control.

In this region, illicit drugs continue to remain among highest-value illicit commodities trafficked internationally.

Through our annual reports on the opiates situation in East and Southeast Asia – and through our regular updates on the amphetamines situation in our region – UNODC keeps track of trends, as well as **your** successes.

We will soon be releasing a Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment for East Asia and the Pacific, which will depict trends and propose ways to improve how we fight transnational organized crime.

Illicit drugs remain the backbone of transnational organized crime. All together, they command the largest share of revenues. They fuel violence, corruption, conflict and addiction.

So my message today – at the opening of this conference – is simple. We cannot afford to take our eyes off the drug threat.

Traffickers seek the paths of least resistance in order to minimize risk and maximize profit. It must, therefore, be our job to stop them.

In this effort, your work is vital. And I commend you for what you are doing.

But for us to succeed we must do three things better.

First, we need to **understand the threat better**. For this, we need to improve the quality of the information we have – and to better share it among ourselves.

But we also need to understand the broader picture. The soon to be released TOCTA report will sharpen our focus on the extent and nature of the threat. Later this morning, my Regional Representative, Mr. Gary Lewis, will be sharing with you some of these elements as part of his overview of the regional drug situation.

Second, we need to enhance **our operational capacity to prevent and respond to illicit trafficking in drugs and precursor chemicals**.

We need to develop better techniques for law enforcement and prosecution. My office in Bangkok is currently working with many of the organizations represented at this meeting to strengthen our response to drug trafficking.

This is especially true in the areas of border control and the control of precursor chemicals through computer-based training for frontline law enforcement officers. It also includes technical evidence-gathering processes for use by prosecutors.

The third area where we must improve is the delivery of **better cooperation across the region and among our respective agencies.**

This may involve regional training to learn new techniques and skills. It may require the sharing of knowledgeable and experienced mentors. It may also involve efforts to promote better understanding between law enforcement and the judiciary – including from peers in other countries.

It may necessitate joint operations, or asking for assistance from a neighbour. It will always require building efficient national criminal intelligence agencies and sharing information among them, and across borders.

All three of these elements are essential given the priority which Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, the UN Secretary-General, has given to fighting TOC – a prioritization reflected in the work of the **UN Task Force on TOC and Drug Trafficking** which he created last year.

As I conclude, I would like to do two more things. First I would like to thank the SPO – as host of this event – for inviting the United Nations to speak this morning.

We cooperate closely with the SPO in Southeast Asia to promote criminal justice responses to **transnational organized crime**. I look forward to seeing this cooperation continue for many years.

The second is to reflect that we must approach the drug problem in this region by promoting both demand as well as supply reduction.

We must fight demand by persuading citizens to stop consuming drugs. We must continue to raise awareness of dangers of drug use to health and development. We must champion evidence-based, community-based treatment.

But, in order to restrict and minimize the supply reaching our citizens, **we rely on you**.

You are the custodians of the laws designed to protect the young and the vulnerable. We count on you to turn these illicit flows into a high-risk operation for the criminals. And while the criminals may form a network, so do we.

It takes concerted cooperation and coordination at both the regional and international levels to defeat criminal networks.

I wish you a successful ADLOMICO.

Kam sa ham nida – and thank you.

Yury Fedotov
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