FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New UNODC SE Asia regional programme addresses transnational organized crime and downsides of regional integration

Bangkok (Thailand), 14 November 2013 – The new UNODC Regional Programme for Southeast Asia and the Pacific was jointly launched today by UNODC Executive Director Mr. Yury Fedotov; HRH Princess Bajrakittiyabha Mahidol, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the UN in Vienna, and H.E. Mr. Chaikasem Nitisiri, Thailand’s Minister of Justice. Launch attendees included key Thai government officials, ambassadors and diplomatic representatives, and UN and NGO partners.

The new UNODC Regional Programme for Southeast Asia promotes the rule of law and assists Member States to address governance, security and public health challenges in Southeast Asia.

“UNODC’s Southeast Asia Regional Programme is important because of the interconnected nature of drugs and transnational crime in this region,” noted Mr. Fedotov at the launch of the Programme. “The new Regional Programme will provide targeted, integrated assistance to Member States in areas where needs are greatest.”

Based on UNODC’s most recent assessment proceeds from crime are estimated conservatively at US$90 billion annually in East Asia and the Pacific. In 2011, UNODC estimated that the global cost of crime amounted to total proceeds of US$2.1 trillion dollars or 3.6 per cent of global GDP.

The Regional Programme for Southeast Asia focuses on five key issues: Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking; Anti-Corruption; Terrorism Prevention; Criminal Justice; and Drugs, Health and Alternative Development.

Within these issues, UNODC will assist member states with data collection, research and global trend analysis; expert policy guidance on legal and international frameworks; and technical assistance and capacity building.

The Regional Programme will support and improve the ability of states to respond to security and rule of law challenges. As the first integrated regional programme, it was developed through extensive research and consultations with Member States and UN partners.

“The new Regional Programme focuses primarily on regional crime and drug challenges that are best addressed through coordinated cross-border and intra-regional cooperation,” said Mr. Jeremy Douglas, UNODC Regional Representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific. “It is supported by country programmes that link to the regional programme and focus on specific national level needs.”

Following the Programme launch, Mr. Fedotov visited Klong Prem prison, where he discussed prison reform and over-crowding issues, and alternatives to prison.

After that, Mr. Fedotov met with key Thai government officials at the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) Academy to discuss UNODC assistance to help DSI meet its mandates to fight transnational organized crime, human trafficking, cyber-crime and environmental crimes. Later that evening, Mr. Fedotov attended a VIP dinner hosted by Thai PM Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra.
For further information please contact:
John Bleho, Media and Communications Specialist,
UNODC Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific
T: (+66) 2288.2091  |  M: (+66) 81.750.0539  |  E: john.bleho@unodc.org

David Dadge, Spokesperson: UNODC
Telephone: (+43 1) 26060-5629
Mobile: (+43-699) 1459-5629, Email: david.dadge@unvienna.org