

**UNODC Executive Director, Yury Fedotov
Remarks at the International Conference on
Alternative Development II
23 -24 November 2015, Bangkok**

**Your Royal Highness,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I thank Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol, and the government of Thailand, for organizing the Second International Conference on Alternative Development.

Your Royal Highness is a tireless advocate of alternative development and the benefits it brings to impoverished farmers, their families and their communities.

Thailand's work has inspired many others. The country is a leader in developing best practices, and has offered invaluable support to many of UNODC's own alternative development programmes across South East Asia.

The theme of ICAD II is the UN Guidelines on Alternative Development. Thailand, once again, played a significant role in the adoption of these guidelines at the 57th Session of the CND, and the UN General Assembly.

Recently, I visited Colombia and Peru. Both countries have also offered a clear demonstration of alternative development's immense potential and how it can dramatically improve lives.

Later this year, countries will also adopt a new development agenda. This places alternative development firmly within the UN's own wider work of helping to lift millions out of poverty and dramatically improve their lives.

But, if we are to succeed, we must also remember that there are considerable challenges to removing farmers' reliance on the cultivation and production of illicit drugs.

In reality, alternative development challenges are linked to much broader governance and agricultural issues. This requires us to work on a wide front that includes: access to markets, land titles, and infrastructure, among others.

In promoting alternative development at the field level, we must also ensure the transference of knowledge and experience to countries and donors.

The overall gross disbursements of alternative development funds from OECD countries in 2013 accounted for a mere 0.1 per cent of global

development assistance. Additional funding is therefore badly needed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Alternative development is not a fiction, it is a fact. It really works.

Working together, we have a generational opportunity to assist farmers and communities currently trapped in demoralising poverty and dangerous criminality.

If we do not, if we turn aside, we risk illicit crop cultivation being handed down from one impoverished generation to another. The cycle of desperation will go on, and on, and on.

Meetings such as ICAD II have the tremendous potential to continue the international community's work and to ensure that this appalling cycle, is broken for ever.

Thank you.