

COVID and the Mekong: how the drug situation has changed and what it means for the future

13:10 – 14:00 (Vienna time)

Monday, 12 April 2021

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In recent years, the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs in East and Southeast Asia has been consolidated into the Mekong region. Recent major cases demonstrated that organized crime groups in the region have successfully weathered challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated mobility restriction measures. Central to this problem is the susceptible environment for organized crime in the Mekong region which needs to be addressed.

The side event will provide an in-depth briefing on the latest developments in the regional illicit drug markets. It will also be a venue to share joint efforts made by member states of the Mekong Memorandum of Understanding (Mekong MOU) on Drug Control to turn the situation around.

Signed in 1993, the Mekong MOU on Drug Control has been an active and effective mechanism in addressing the illicit drug problems in the Mekong region, with the collective efforts by the six member states including Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam, and UNODC serving as the secretariat.

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| 13:10 – 13:15 | Remarks by Head of the Thai delegation |
| 13:15 – 13:20 | Remarks by Head of the Cambodian delegation |
| 13:20 – 13:25 | Remarks by Head of the Chinese delegation |
| 13:25 – 13:30 | Remarks by Head of UNODC delegation |
| 13:30 – 13:45 | Briefing on the drug situation in the Mekong by UNODC |
| 13:45 – 13:55 | Overview of Operation 1511 by Thailand |
| 13:55 – 14:00 | Closing remarks by UNODC |

