

## Project Childhood (Protection Pillar: Thailand)

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### Introductory Training to Community Policing Officers and Community Leaders

13 November 2012

### Introductions and Welcome

#### **Ms. Margaret Akullo**

**Project Coordinator, Project Childhood (Protection Pillar)**

**UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific**

Good Morning, Sawaadee Kaa

- Pol Maj Gen Subbhawut Bhibhatbhan, Deputy Commissioner of the Central Investigation Bureau, the Royal Thai Police,
- Distinguished police officers and community leaders from Thailand
- Our colleagues from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam
- Our donor – AusAID and our partner in Project Childhood - World Vision
- Distinguished participants

On behalf Project Childhood, I would like to welcome you all to this introductory training for Community Policing Officers and Community Leaders. Project Childhood is an AusAID funded initiative to combat the sexual exploitation of children - mainly in the travel and tourism sectors - in the Greater Mekong sub-region. The project focuses on Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam and is being implemented in two complementary pillars - the Protection Pillar and the Prevention Pillar.

The Protection Pillar, being delivered by UNODC and INTERPOL - aims at enhancing law enforcement capacity to identify, arrest and prosecute travelling child sex offenders. The Prevention Pillar, being delivered by World Vision, aims at preventing children from falling victims of sexual exploitation by building community resilience and promoting child safe tourism.

We will shortly hear from representatives from AusAID and Project Childhood and they will provide a brief overview of Project Childhood. What I would like

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to highlight is that this workshop demonstrates an important and significant milestone for Project Childhood:

- Firstly, it builds on Australia's long-term support for programmes that protect children and prevent their abuse
- Secondly, it brings together the Protection and Prevention pillars of Project Childhood
- Thirdly, it brings together Police Officers and Community leaders
- But most importantly, the training focuses on raising awareness and developing learning in creating a protective environment for children in order to prevent their exploitation and abuse.

As part of today's training agenda, we are delighted to have the Prevention Pillar, delivering their Community Duty Bearer training that focuses on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse in Communities. We will also be hearing from the Australian Federal Police, who will provide an overview of Community Policing in Australia. We also look forward to hearing the work of the Community Police Officers who work in 40 communities in Thailand.

We hope that this introductory training will not only provide general awareness on issues relevant to the community but also that the training will equip you with the knowledge and skills on how to respond when encountered with a criminal case involving a child. The key message is that we create an environment that will protect children and prevent their abuse.

On behalf of UNODC and the Project Childhood team, we would like to thank the Criminal Investigation Bureau of the Royal Thai Police and in particular the Highway Police for their commitment and support in helping make this event possible. We would also like to acknowledge the support and guidance provided by the AusAID team in Bangkok.

Thank you and I wish you all a successful and fruitful two days.