

Project Childhood (Protection Pillar)-Lao PDR

Workshop on Child Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism: Situation and Responses in the Mekong Sub-region

Vientiane capital

6th June 2013

Vote of Thanks

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UNODC Lao PDR Country Office

Chair, Heads of Delegations and Distinguished delegates

On behalf of UNODC and the Protection Pillar, I would like to extend my special thanks to His Excellency Prof. Ket Kietisak, Vice-Minister of Justice, members of the Committee responsible for drafting legislation, especially the Judicial Administration System Department, Ministry of Justice on their initiative in organizing this workshop. This indicates the good will of the Lao government in addressing child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism.

For their participation and contributions, I would also like to thank **Kel Mansfield** from the Australian Federal Police, the distinguished delegates from Cambodia - **Brig. Gen. Yim Vireak, Brig. Gen. Mok Bunchheang and Maj. Duong Thavery**, Thailand - Mr. Pongpat Riangkruar, Dr. Korbkul Winitnaiyapak and Viet Nam - **Mr. Tran Van Dung, Pol. Senior Lt. Col. Nguyen Van Trang** and **Margaret Akullo**, Protection Pillar Project Coordinator. We are most grateful for the presentations, discussions and most importantly the experience shared and lessons learned today.

I don't have to describe in more detail how much we have already learned from today's workshop. I believe and hope that the information gained today will add value to your work and in particular the legal review work of the Legal Responsible Committee.

Thanks to the Interpreters who today worked very hard to make our discussions possible. Thanks to the Secretariats of Ministry of Justice and UNODC for their excellent coordination and support. Your assistance is very much appreciated.

On behalf of the Project Childhood (Protection Pillar) team, I would like again to thank the Ministry of Justice for their collaboration and cooperation in organizing and

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delivering this workshop. I would also like to extend sincere appreciation to Khun Nuch and colleagues from AusAID and the Australian Embassy for their generous support.

Finally, to our distinguished participants, thank you for your active participation and fruitful discussions at today's workshop. We look forward to continuing this important work with you in order to address legislative gaps in Lao PDR and to protect Lao children from travelling child sex offenders.

I wish you all success and happiness. Thank you.