

U N D C P

Eastern Horizons

News on the fight against drugs and crime
in East Asia and the Pacific

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People POWER Against DRUGS

It is well known that illicit drugs kill dreams, but it was so far unknown that dreams can resuscitate lives killed by drugs.

Believe it or not but it happened on 24 June 2001 in Port Macquarie, NSW, Australia. Ordinary people (who claim to have succeeded through God after long prayers) brought about the miracle, not the government or important guys. It took the death of a young boy to inspire the miracle.

In 1997, a young, handsome and beloved boy, David McKay, a poly drug user died due to an overdose. His body decomposed for five days in a motel before being found. No big news; just one more of the many tragedies of drug related deaths in Australia, a country with one of the highest addiction rates to illicit drugs in the world, and one with the highest rates of youth suicide within the Asia/Pacific region.

The story should have ended with the



Margaret and associates at the David McKay Hassala drug rehabilitation farm of Port Macquarie.

tombstone in the Port Macquarie graveyard. But Margaret, David's mother, did not give up, even after David's death. She was frustrated and angry for ten years while talking to hundreds of doctors, psychiatrists, politicians, city administrators, social services, police officers trying to save David's life. They told her it could not

be done. After David's death, Margaret was invited to Hassala Sweden to learn about the drug rehabilitation model, which became very famous in Sweden and Europe for its high drug rehabilitation efficacy.

After this visit she became even more frustrated and angry. That model could have saved David but it was unknown in Australia. Back to her small town where she, as an ordinary retired kindergarten teacher, never had been listened to by important people, she reattempted to engage people (and God through her prayers) to "Keep our Kids Alive", which was her clear and simple message. She got the attention of 1,200 people at her first Port Macquarie "Drug Summit" in 1999.

The uncommon goal was quite a challenge: "Create the first Drug Free Town of Australia". The initial budget to achieve the goal: 1 million Aus\$ to build a Hassala Drug Rehabilitation Centre in Port Macquarie. Money available: 200 Aus\$.

It was laughable. But it was done. A business man called and asked "how much would it cost?". "One Million \$?" "You got it, Maggie". The furniture and equipment of the large mansion was donated by shops and supporters of the cause.

After, less than one year, astonished politicians, UN diplomats and other VIPs, who believe in miracles, inaugurated the "David McKay Hassala drug rehabilitation farm of Port Macquarie" with a message and a stance. This initiative may be the first step to build a drug-free town in Australia. The great smiles of the first ten guests were as big as David's smile on a framed picture.

David is back loving his mother more than ever, serving his community, the Nation, and the world through his death. May be the seeds of "People power against drugs" will soon break new ground.

– Sandro Calvani

UNDCP in Myanmar and THE ANNUAL ADDED ENEMY

Mong Pauk, in the Shan State, is the headquarters of the UNDCP Wa Development Project (WADP). The area is under the control of the Wa, an ethnic minority group living in the Northern to the South Eastern part of the Shan State.

The area is extremely impervious due to its mountainous characteristics. The initial reluctance of the local authorities to the establishment and development of the project is not the only difficulty that UNDCP staff has to face up there. During the Monsoons season, which lasts almost 4 months, the inaccessibility of the place is the enemy number one.

Just one week ago, on 13 July, it took three days for the WADP chief, Mr. Xavier Bouan, to return to Yangon. He said that 17 Kilometers of road have been blown away by landslides caused by heavy rain. Moreover, two different means – car and motorbike – have been used to reach the nearest airport in Kengtung. If one experienced this adventure and succeeded in arriving to Kengtung, problems won't be over though. Once there, the risk of being blocked for one or two days, until weather conditions allow an aircraft to take off, is concrete.

With this in mind, the venue of a UNDCP workshop focused on alternative development issues, scheduled for mid- July, has been moved from Kengtung – far closer to the Mong Pawk- based Wa Project – to Taunggyi. Nevertheless, in order to avoid the adverse weather conditions a workshop can be easily relocated elsewhere, but unfortunately the areas under opium poppy cultivations cannot be shifted according to the seasons nor can UNDCP work there be postponed.

THREATS TO THE NEW ECONOMY

Policy on Cyber Crime

One of the most significant forms of transnational crime facing the international community is computer-related, or "cyber crime". These emerging threats were highlighted during a Policy Seminar on "Cyber Crime: Threats to the New Economy", which was held on 12 June 2001 during the Third Asia Development Forum. The event was jointly organized by the ESCAP Human Resources Development (HRD) Section and the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UN-ODCCP).

Four international experts served as panelists at the Seminar, where they engaged in a lively debate and discussion in order to identify new cyber crime threats and trends affecting the Asian economy, and examine appropriate best practice responses to these challenges. The panelists were Dr Roderic Broadhurst, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, Centre for Criminology, University of Hong Kong (who also moderated the panel), Mr Tan Ken Hwee, State Counsel and Deputy Public Prosecutor with the Attorney-General's Chambers in Singapore, Mr Raymond H. Velez, Investigator, Law and Corporate Affairs for Microsoft Thailand, Limited, and Dr Lorenzo Valeri, Research Associate with

the International Centre for Security Analysis (ISCA), King's College, London.

The Internet is being used by hackers and criminals to transmit computer viruses, invade privacy, steal or corrupt valuable information, perpetrate frauds and manipulate stock markets. It has been exploited by paedophiles to create and distribute child pornography and, in some cases, to befriend or abduct children.

"A major concern is how to ensure that the Internet will develop into a secure environment for learning, exchange of ideas and international creativity"

A concerted effort will have to be made to ensure that everyone in the developed and developing world alike has access to basic resources such as education, computers, telecommunications systems that are needed to participate in the global economy. A major concern is how to ensure that the Internet will develop into a secure environment for learning, exchange of ideas

and international creativity.

Against this backdrop, the panelists considered three main questions. First, when prosecuting foreign-based computer crimes, what are the contradictions between international law and technology? Second, what can Asian governments do to repel countless unregistered and unregulated brokerages from fraudulently selling offshore securities to unsuspecting victims? And third, how are the European Union and other individual states getting ready to counter computer crimes, and what are the recent legal developments and possible lessons for Asia?

The panelists reflected on the above-mentioned challenges, among others, and engaged in a lively discussion with the audience. They concluded by noting that addressing the numerous problems of cyber crime will require a concerted effort from national governments and the international community as a whole. Perhaps the greatest challenge to developing an effective global strategy will be to train skilled investigators and prosecutors and keep them up to date on the latest technological and criminal developments.

- Laura Skolnik, HRD, UN/ESCAP

CHALLENGES AHEAD for Indonesia and Myanmar

The Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) has added Indonesia and Myanmar to its annually published list of states it considers as "soft" or "uncooperative" in the fight against money laundering. In reviewing their compliance with the Forty Recommendations (the established international standard for effective anti-money laundering measures), both countries were found to be lacking a basic set of anti-money laundering provisions.

More specifically, in Indonesia money laundering is currently not a criminal offense. Deficient are also reporting and customer identification requirements. The drafted law on money launder-

ing under consideration by the Parliament is poised to rectify these deficiencies.

Myanmar has not criminalised money laundering for crimes other than drug trafficking. Other deficiencies are noted in regulation of financial institutions, record-keeping and reporting.

In their annual review of non-cooperative countries, the FATF also pointed a finger at Nauru and the Philippines, which are already on the list. In the event that these states fail to take the appropriate legal steps against money laundering, the FATF recommended stepping up surveillance of transactions from 30 September 2001.

HOW NINE YEAR OLD 'SAO' won a small battle

Let me tell you a war story. A story of a deadly combat between a nine-year-old slum girl named **Sao** and her grandfather, a paedophile. The stakes are the same as in any war: death, maiming, or if you're lucky, injury in any case, with damage not too deep. War is war; only the weapons change. Sao won her battle. She's alive and healing. Her war against drugs and incest is over. But, gosh what a girl. She's one of those one- in- a-million kids. From what we suspect and guess, she fought her battle alone for two years.

Sao's teacher isn't safe yet, and that gives the story a twist. Her neighbours are protecting her, but they can only do so much. They live with their own fears, and lock their doors against things that go bump in the night, like crying children, drunk talk, and paedophiles. That's why the incest went on for as long as it did — the neighbours wouldn't say anything, do anything. They said, "its probably not as bad as that, so let it go." Sao's own relatives said: "the kid is lying." Not much help there either.

This morning, Sao is kind of safe, but not entirely safe. Her grandfather left town one step ahead of the Police. His amphetamine pills and his drinking and paedophilia and incest shadow him and all the booze and ya baa in Bangkok City only intensify what he might do to her. The neighbours say openly where they think he's hiding.

So once again, everyone knows except the uniforms. Guess you might call it an aberrant form of a "blind man's bluff." It's suggested that by local practice, they work best with incentive. We have no incentive to offer except a documented case of incest, paedophilia and probably drug dealing. But that doesn't do much at a bank tellers window, so free he is.

Drug wars, slums, kindergarten teachers, incest, paedophilia, police and their police stations. They promised us they would protect Sao and her teacher. I heard them with my own ears: otherwise I wouldn't say



so. The male police wanted to make a deal: we produce the child for them to see and they protect her. We said, "Produce a woman police officer and we will produce the girl". They said — and they told the truth — no women police officers were available. Count your fingers and your toes plus one and you have the number of women police officers trained in proper questioning of young children in Bangkok City.

That was the second night, after the teacher had been detained for the second time. Same charges, different set of police. Arrested for "Restraining a child." A lie of course. How did the police come to think this 24 - year - old kindergarten teacher was "Restraining a child?" They were told that by Sao's grandfather, that's how. It was his way of getting even.

It started like this. Her mom left when Sao was seven months old and her dad disappeared about two years ago when Grandmother died, leaving her with her grandfather. That's when everything turned weird for Sao. Five weeks ago, it became unbearable. She began staying late at the homes of her friends, until ten or eleven at night, then sleeping outside rather than going

home to Grandfather.

The neighbours started whispering, and Sao looked worse with every new day. Same dirty clothes. A haunted look. The women began talking to Sao's kindergarten teacher. Yes, at nine years of age she is still in kindergarten. True she went when she was four and five, but then had to drop out, and grandfather never did get around to getting her into the first grade, but that's another story for another day.

Sao's teacher was the only adult she knew she could trust and all she asked for was to sleep in her teacher's house — just on the edge of the mat inside the mosquito net so the mosquitoes and the roaches couldn't bother her. When the teacher asked her why she didn't want to go home, Sao was silent.

That was enough. The teacher knew. She phoned and we said, "Can you get the child out right now? Tonight." She consulted with her uncle who is the community leader, and he said: "its late, lets all go to bed and tomorrow morning I, the community leader, will bring the girl to face her grandfather." The teacher phoned back, and we said: Lordy lord, you should get that child out right

now!" And she did, but had to wait 3 hours until everyone went to sleep. Didn't even wake her husband. She and Sao ran out of the slum, dogs howling and hailed a taxi.

The teacher had forgot to bring money, but Sao had 100 Baht she had stolen from her grandfather. That was what she was supposed to get from each drug delivery she made — they use the children, especially girls to make the deliveries because the police are reluctant to stop and search them, but he would keep the money for booze and so Sao had to steal to get what she's earned. So the 100 Baht was taxi fare.

They got to us about 3:20 a.m. and her teacher told Sao she could trust Noi, the House Mom. In the morning at school, the teacher told everyone that she did not know where the girl had disappeared. At 8:00 a.m. we brought Sao to the local police station with Noi. Sao sat in the car, the Captain came out to the car and asked her if she was safe and happy and wanted to stay with us. She nodded yes. That was enough. We have a good reputation. It was entered into the Police daybook.

At 3:30 p.m., just as our kindergarten was closing and the teachers were shutting the doors, the police came. They told our teacher to go down to the police station to be questioned for possibly "Restraining a child." They verbally forced our teacher to the station on the word of Sao's paedophile grandfather. Imagine! Arrest the good guy with a complaint from the bad guy. It sounds like a bad western movie. Except in this case, the people are real.

It took hours, literally hours to clear the books. We all got to the station about seven in the evening, left about three in the morning. The part that took so long was that they demanded that we bring Sao to the station to confront her grandfather and we told them that was against the law. But it's scary in police stations. These cats are giant Goliath's and we are David's with no slingshots and no smooth pebbles. There was no one way window for the confrontation.

There were no women police officers, no one trained to speak of such things, no rag doll or teddy bear for the girl to point to where this and that might have happened so she wouldn't have to point to her own body. Just men and their guns and their badges and their polished boots trying to do their job quickly and efficiently, but thoroughly miffed because we kept saying no. We refused to produce the girl. Instead we said we were a Registered Charitable Foundation and showed a copy of the entry into

the daybook of our local Precinct Station.

Finally, we went home. We all understood each other, although we didn't agree. The main thing was Sao that remained asleep in our Centre. Her biggest worry was if anyone would give a hug to her teddy bear she had left at home. Sao did not know of our visit to the station and that her grandfather had, finally, been fingerprinted.

It's a tiny incident - not even a footnote in the story of the Klong Toey Drug Wars, now being waged each day. But it's a good guy, bad guy story. Sao and her young teacher are the good guys. The bad guys are her grandfather and his drinking buddies who watched the incest, and suspected the drugs, and knew he was buying the booze they were drinking and were too afraid to say anything. Frightened men whose fear and possible loss of face over-rode, and poisoned everything, even their love of children. Harsh words, but there is no nice way to tell this story.

People like Grandfather sell these pills to their friends, to children and even to Elephants - a Sacred Animal here in Thailand. On the street the other night, I asked an elephant man "Hey Pilgrim, what was your medicine bill today for your large friend here?" He said "nine pills." Ya baa. Amphetamine that sells for about 45 Baht for each pill if you buy them wholesale, 60 Baht retail. That's how they keep the elephants awake at night as they wander the Bangkok streets and then walk back kilometres to the bit of overgrown grassland where they are temporarily camped.

The story gets worse. The next afternoon Grandfather filed another complaint against the teacher. A different set of police officers came to her house in the slum - SUGGESTED that she should produce the child or else. She phoned us and came to our Centre a little later with Grandfather, his cronies, and the Police. She had no choice. When I heard, I said to myself "we're in for a bad patch of weather." The Police and the bad guys had pushed, shoved and bullied the teacher calling for a showdown. We had no choice. It was time to firmly grasp the nettle.

I told everyone to lock the doors, not to let the Police into the Centre and the grandfather was not allowed to see Sao under any circumstances! Sao was to be kept upstairs on the third floor happily innocent of all of this. We demanded that any police questioning had to be conducted by a trained woman police officer. No men, but it didn't work. Sao looked down from the third floor and saw everything. She was terrified and hid under

a bed and wouldn't come out, so two of the other girls crawled under the bed with her and held each other and cried together.

We stonewalled for four and a half hour until a trained policewoman arrived. Sao was questioned with only women present. The male Police insisted on at least seeing the girl. We refused to let them talk to her, but they saw she was fine and they were satisfied.

Then the nightmare.

The Police - on their own - invited Grandfather and his cronies into our Centre to explain things in front of the teacher. This was after they had promised to protect the innocent. I was horrified. It was after ten at night and the following day was a school day. We have 30 street kids living at the Centre going to school in the morning. These are kids who have turned their lives around who don't like policemen in the best of circumstances. Kids who were terrified by the loud voices coming from below and knowing that Sao's grandfather and cronies were there, and if the bad guys could come and take Sao, they could take any of them too, at any time.

My good friends reading this, it gets worse, then a bit better.

After 30 loud minutes of denials and cursing, Grandfather screamed out at the top of his lungs "Sao I love you, and I will come and rescue you from this hellhole." She heard him and came out from under the bed, down to the second floor, where she was still hidden from his view and screamed back, "You don't love me! You do bad things to me!"

I asked the Police to leave immediately, asking how they could let such a thing happen. Didn't they have children of their own? Didn't they care?

They finally got it and said they were sorry and sent Grandfather and his cronies out into the rain. The police-woman told the 30 girls they were safe. And one of the policemen went out to his car and brought back a teddy bear he said he'd bought that day for his eight-year-old daughter. He gave it to Sao. She thanked him, hugged Teddy, and fell asleep in the chair. However, it's not over yet.

Grandfather is still on the run. Sao can not go out of the Centre, but she has put on weight and eats like there's no tomorrow - giggles a lot and whispers secrets to her new friends. I do not know when or if she can ever go home again. We're trying to locate her dad and long lost mom, but I'm not too sure that's a good idea.

- Father Joe Maier, Human Development Foundation, Bangkok



Intense group discussions emerged among the participants



Organic fertilizer as it is introduced by Karamosia

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION in East Asia

Alternative development (AD) projects, seeking the replacement of opium production by other means of livelihood, are currently implemented in several countries in the region. As part of the UNDCP project "Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia," a regional seminar on alternative development and illicit crop eradication was held in Taunggyi, Myanmar 16-19 July.

Policymakers representing China, Viet Nam, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar were present, as well as AD project managers and senior drug control personnel from the field in these countries. The aim of the seminar was to share information on policies, strategies and activities in the field of alternative development and illicit crop eradication.

Experiences from the various countries at both the policy and project levels were presented and discussed during the first two days of the seminar. In the discussions that followed, some of the key issues surfacing were cross border trade and cooperation, competitiveness of AD products, law enforcement in AD and resource mobilisation and allocation.

A field trip on the third day allowed the participants to gain significant understanding of innovative agricultural techniques undertaken by Karamosia, a Japanese NGO involved in agricultural development, as well as to observe local living conditions of communities around Inle Lake. The fourth and final day of the seminar the participants engaged in group discussions.

Among the recommendations made were that community law enforcement approaches could be incorporated in the AD projects while regular law enforcement could not, issues such as land allocations and tenure need to be addressed, marketing strategies for AD products should be explored, and joint mechanisms established to facilitate movement of AD products across borders.

Finally, before returning to their respective countries, many of the delegates took the opportunity to visit the newly opened

Opium Elimination museum in Rangoon. The participants gave plenty of positive feedback and they also expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to meet and stressed how important it was that the AD environment in the region continued to network and stayed in touch.

A full report of the seminar's conclusions and recommendations, including papers and presentations, will soon be available at the Regional Centre.

– Lise Bendiksen, UNDCP, Bangkok

LEGAL INSTRUMENT TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ESCAP has decided to promote legal instruments as tools against a "modern form of slavery." With the continued rise of trafficking in women and children for sexual purposes in mind the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held a regional seminar on the use of legal instruments as weapons in the fight against this modern form of slavery.

The Regional Seminar on Using Legal Instruments to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children, which was held 1-3 August at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok, was organized by ESCAP in collaboration with the

International Organization for Migration. More than 50 participants from 15 countries in Central, South, and Southeast Asia attended.

According to the United Nations, trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation constitutes a major social problem in Central, South and Southeast Asia. Experts are concerned that trafficking is still on the rise and increasingly linked to international organized crime.

In recent years, significant new national and international tools, such as the United Nations Protocol on Trafficking supplementing the Convention against Transnational Or-

CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION Bears Fruit

Cross-border co-operation such as the sharing of experiences and information is an efficient instrument to combat and control drug trafficking. Such co-operation has proven to be difficult due to problems such as limitations of equipment, differences as to procedural matters, lack of trust and personal relations as well as language differences.

UNDCP has been working to improve the active co-operation across and along the borders of the region within the project titled *Development of Cross-Border Law Enforcement in East Asia*. Efficient liaison structures and better communication channels within the enforcement agencies will hopefully lead to a greater suppression of drug trafficking. Some developments already seem to prove that we are heading that way as, for example, the outcome of previous Cross-border Co-operation meetings between China and Myanmar.

On 23 April 2001, under the facilitation of UNDCP Regional Centre, an important Chinese fugitive was arrested in Muse (Myanmar) and extradited to China through the Muse/Ruelli border crossing. This Chinese man is thought to be one of the key players of the heroin trade. Governing one of the largest armed drug smuggling groups within the Golden Tri-



Cross-Border meeting



Fact finding mission



The fugitive in custody

angle, his capture is viewed as a major victory for China in its counternarcotic efforts.

At the time of Mr Xiaolin's arrest, eighteen members of his criminal group were also caught and three tons of heroin seized. The detention of Mr Tan Xiaolin was accomplished through close co-operation between the Chinese and Myanmar police

after twelve months of pursuit. Narcotics produced in Myanmar are, generally, smuggled out from South East Asia through China. By transiting drugs through an area, history has proven that drugs inevitably seep into the local communities and China is no exception. Due to the escalation of drug abuse that drug trafficking causes in China, Chinese authorities increasingly underline the importance of good counternarcotic relations between the countries in the region.

Looking ahead

An Initial Needs Analysis trip for the 2nd Phase of the *Development of Cross-Border Law Enforcement* project was conducted in Myanmar at the beginning of July. Places visited included Kyaing Tong and Tachileik, two areas nick-named the Golden Areas, on the Myanmar side. Here drug trafficking is active by means of using long-tail boats to reach Chieng Rai in Thailand and Bo Kaew in Laos. The areas of Hpa An and Myawaddy were also visited. These two areas form part of the new ATS trafficking route into Mae Sot in the Tak province of Thailand. A seizure of 2.6 million tablets of ATS, believed to be brought from the areas opposite Mae Sot and, thereafter, taken across the Moei River in a long tail boat, were made in Mae Sot on 16th July 2001.

More than 60 drug law enforcement officials, at key inland checkpoints, river ports and key international border crossings, were interviewed. Despite the sensitive nature of the trip, due to the unsure security situation (as active fighting still occurs in Myawaddy between the pro-Rangoon Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) and the anti-Rangoon Karen National Union (KNU)), it was still very informative, educational and supportive for the project. CCDAC played a co-ordinating role, between all drug law agencies, in preparation for this trip.

The Myanmar government showed a strong commitment to cooperate with Thailand and Laos on drug law enforcement matters within these border zones. Important positive commitments since the second phase of the project will prioritise the Thai borders with Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia.

STOP

ganized Crime, have been adopted to combat trafficking.

The seminar was a forum for information sharing and awareness-raising for government officials about the range of legal instruments available to them to combat trafficking and how to adapt them to local policies. The regional seminar was the first of four meetings to be held throughout the region to deal in more depth with the issue and to develop mechanisms for cooperation among countries.

For more information, please contact: Thelma Kay, Chief of the Women in Development Section, UN/ESCAP, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand Tel: (66-2) 288-1989; Fax: (66-2) 288 1018 E-mail: wid.unescap@un.org

Myanmar, OPIUM SURVEY 2001

UNDCP's mandate in the field of illicit crops monitoring is aimed at providing technical assistance and working closely with the field offices and the governments to establish national monitoring mechanisms, rather than building an in-house monitoring team.

In this connection, it should be remembered that in the Political Declaration adopted at the 1998 Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Drugs, Member States agreed to eliminate or significantly reduce the supply of and demand for illicit drugs by the year 2008. Subsequently, the UN General Assembly requested UNDCP to provide Member States with the necessary assistance to compile reliable and internationally comparable data.

As a result, in March 1999 the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), through a series of resolutions, recommended that UNDCP collaborate with Governments that so request, in establishing an international network for monitoring the cultivation of illicit crops. In addition, the CND requested UNDCP to establish a central data bank and information system on the basis of information furnished by governments on the cultivation of illicit crops.

The Commission also requested UNDCP to provide requesting Governments with the technical assistance that they require and to take steps to mobilize international logistical and financial support, as necessary, with a view to establishing national mechanisms for monitoring and verification of the cultivation of illicit crops.

Currently the Illicit Crops Monitoring Programme – ICMP covers six countries, including Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Afghani-

stan, Laos and Myanmar. In the latter, due to security issues and the different characteristics of the cropping pattern, ICMP undertook in March 2000 a field mission to validate a methodological approach utilizing available satellite imagery.

The findings led to the definition of a methodology that combines ground survey and the use of high-resolution imagery in problematic areas. As funding for the actual survey did not materialize UNDCP initiated in November 2000, a limited and partial sample-based ground survey in Shan State, where some 95% of the national opium poppy cultivation is concentrated. The objective is to get a better understanding of the cultivation pattern in Myanmar and collect information on opium yield, addiction and price and also initiate the training of government professionals for the 2002 annual opium poppy survey.

According to the year 2000 estimates, Myanmar has 108,700 Ha under opium poppy cultivation, with an overall opium production of 1,000 tones. In the same year Afghanistan resulted as the world's largest producer of opium with a 3,275 tones of opium production but with 82,172 Ha under cultivation. This apparent disproportion is due to the fact that in Myanmar the yield is much lower (about 10 to 13 Kg/ha) than in Afghanistan (about 35 Kg/ha). This means that Myanmar has more opium poppy fields covering a larger area.

The Shan State is divided into 52 townships, themselves divided into "village tracts", themselves divided into villages. The 2001 opium survey covered a 25,000 squared Km area, including 11 township and 100 village tracts. The total area

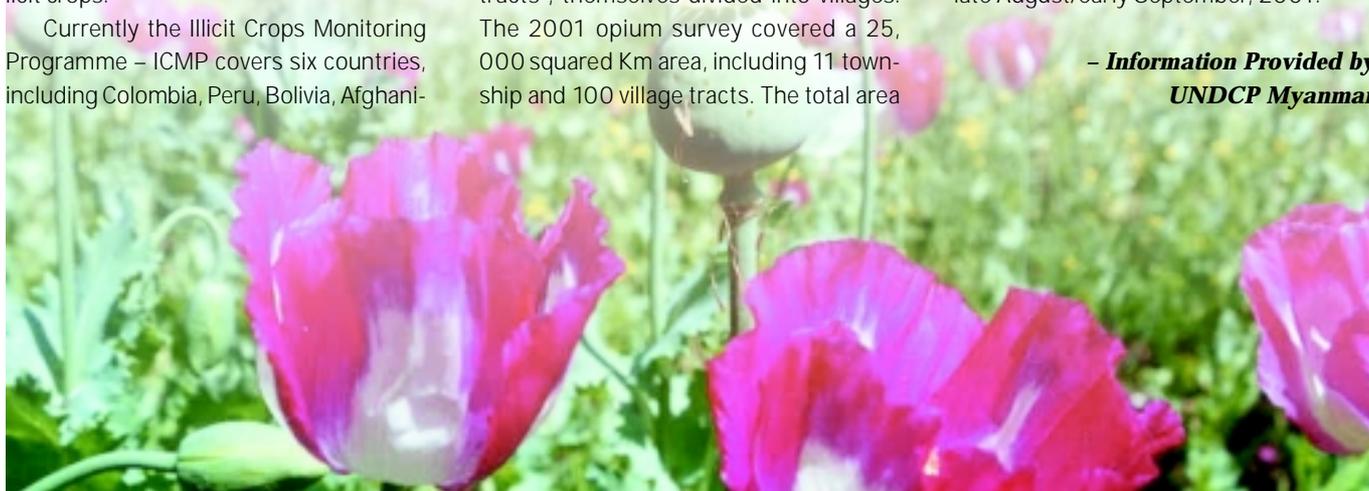
covered by the survey represents about 1/6 of the Shan State but it includes about half of the area under highest cultivation.

Upon a randomized selection of townships and villages, the methodology adopted is based on interviews of the village headman. This approach, replicated on a village by village basis, allows the collection of various data such as: number of inhabitants, number of households, number of households growing opium, opium farm gate price through the year, number of opium addicts by gender and age. The final and crucial stage of the interviews consists of sketching every poppy field within the village boundaries, in order to identify the total number of fields for village and allow the randomized selection of fields to be measured.

This final step includes the measurement of the overall extension of a field and the collection of information for the yield estimate. In this respect, a technique recommended by the Expert Groups Meeting on Yield – held in Vienna in October 2000 – is followed: a transect is laid in the middle of the field. Then 5 plots of 1 squared meter are selected. In the five plots the surveyors count the number of poppy flowers, immature and mature capsules as well as the diameter and high of up to 10 capsules.

As a result, after the field work, all data collected are entered in a data base designed by ICMP in the year 2000 and the final findings of the "Myanmar opium survey 2001" are expected to be released by late August/early September, 2001.

**– Information Provided by
UNDCP Myanmar**



Bridging diversity: HOW TO PROTECT high risk groups

The Project Demand Reduction Among High Risk Groups main objective is to improve the capacity of the six MOU governments and also NGOs to identify and resolve emerging drug abuse problems among high risk groups. Since the Project began in January 1998, high-risk groups, both captive and non-captive, were identified in each country. Assessment methodologies appropriate for these groups were developed, introduced, tested, and adopted in each country.

All countries identified secondary school children as a captive target group. Street children or out of school youth were common non-captive target groups. An on-line database is being prepared for storing data generated in schools and other surveys that could be shared between governments.

The participating countries selected a total of nearly thirty project sites that exemplify the diversity of the region. From the rim of China at such Silk Road sites as Tashgar and Urumqi to capital cities in the other five countries and old capitals like Chiang Mai and Luang Prabang, the mixture of cultures, problems, and drug use practices is vast and complex. By agreeing to allow UNDCP to work in such varied situations, the governments both recognize the seriousness of the problems confronting them as well as their trust in UNDCP in general and this Project in particular.

The Project Coordinator Dr Marc Morival has devised a varied approach to meet differing conditions in each country so that assessing groups in these diverse conditions could be accomplished. Training was conducted in all countries and in several international study tours. In 2000,

delegates visited drug treatment facilities in Delhi and Madras. Officials from Myanmar and Laos visited schools and treatment centers in Thailand.

Support was given to national drug control agencies such as newly established National Authority for Combatting Drugs in Cambodia. The Project also supported innovative cooperative work between the Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Action and the Standing Office for Drug Control in Vietnam that allowed them



to survey some 20,000 school students and then process the results.

Thailand adopted a different approach because it had already conducted school surveys. The Project has provided a forum for teachers in Thailand to develop drug demand reduction work in schools as part of a package aimed at all forms of deviant behavior. Initial results were so positive that national authorities would like to expand the work initiated by the project to establish learning centers in each province in the country.

A number of suggestions aimed at making the Project even more innovative were formulated: to involve more women

in its work and also to involve target populations as partners in the Project and thereby obtain more accurate survey results.

Major changes have occurred regarding drug conditions in the region since the Project's inception. These included the emergence of ATS abuse in all the MOU countries, increased injecting drug use, and the spread of HIV into the heterosexual community in all countries. Because of the differing conditions in the

Project sites identified by each country as well as the diversity of government capacity, some rescheduling might be necessary. Mobile populations also presented special challenges. To deal with the complicated issues in the region, networking of the sort that UNAIDS is carrying out is necessary.

Among the suggestions made at the meeting were that HIV/AIDS prevention and interventions for IDUs and other high risk drug users should be addressed within the regional strategies. In view of the diversity

of national capacities and of the need to customize interventions to individual countries, the Project life should be extended subject to availability of funds.

Activities considered necessary were: an activation of the database, a direct involvement of the target populations in the implementation of the project activities and an increased consideration of the regional issues of mobile populations and drug abuse. Furthermore it was suggested to broaden the regional scope of the project consistent with the ACCORD Plan of Action.

**– Myint Myint Kyi,
Assistant Project Manager**

MARITIME AND RIPARIAN DRUG TRAFFICKING: An Increasing Challenge to the Region

The large majority of the East Asian and the Pacific countries are dependent on the sea or the Mekong River for their economic survival. However, relatively open land and maritime borders with essentially unmonitorable coastlines greatly facilitate illicit maritime and river activities. Moreover, the region's sparsely unpopulated coasts and the vast numbers of quasi-inhabited islands further complicate the situation.

Crimes at sea such as drug smuggling, human trafficking and piracy involve illegal incursions into national waters and, thereby, threaten the surrounding countries' social and political interests. Generally, maritime crime constitutes criminal offences that are connected to ships or to the sea and normally more than one jurisdiction is involved due to its transnational character. Maritime crime affects the regional security and stability and no one country can deal with this threat without the involvement of neighbouring countries.

Organised Criminal Groups will utilise any kind of transport in order to transport drugs or precursors to final processing destinations or markets. Maritime trafficking, in particular, is escalating and becoming a major regional and global concern. In May of this year, the United States Coast Guard expressed its concern over an unprecedented surge of maritime drug trafficking. They estimated that over 90% of all narcotics within the United States were smuggled in by maritime means. Maritime trafficking includes shipping by bulk cargo ships or fishing vessels. Specially designed vessels and high-speed "go-fast boats" are of large concern within the Caribbean region and such boats are now appearing in the Asia Pacific region.

Traffickers conceal multi-ton shipments of drugs with commercial goods carried by legitimate shipping services. When the vessels are specially designed for the purpose, hidden compartments may not be accessed without taking the vessel apart. Moreover, the detection of containers used for the purpose of smuggling drugs and contraband is extremely difficult due to the huge volume of global container

traffic. Systematic inspection of the container traffic is virtually impossible.

The emergence of South East Asia as a major transportation, communication and financial centre, where more than a third of the world's trade convoys pass through, makes the region one of the most important trading points in the world. Subsequently, the transport by maritime means is developing into the preferred mode for smuggling persons or illicit goods such as narcotics and arms. Such a shift in mode of transport is also due to various other factors such as the effective counter-narcotic efforts on land, the ability to transport larger quantities in one consignment (particularly beneficial for relative high volume and low cost drugs such as marijuana) and the larger possibility to escape detection. Moreover, just as countries with weak jurisdictional arrangements turn into safe havens for criminal activities, the complex Law of the Sea, which covers the maritime areas, functions also as a major attraction for criminal groups.

The most important and effective response to maritime crime is national and international co-operation between various drug control agencies. As an example of effective co-operation, an event at the beginning of this year, where two fishing trawlers were intercepted and raided near the Surin group of islands in the Andaman Sea, can be illustrated. In this incident the Joint Task Force in Thailand, composed of the Office of the Narcotics Control Board, the Royal Thai Navy and the Royal Thai Army, seized approximately 116 kg of heroin and 7,798,000 tablets of metamphetamine. The drugs were believed to originate from the Thai-Burmese border

region were they had been transported along the border to the port of Moulmein in Myanmar and, thereafter, loaded onto a Myanmar cargo ship which delivered it to the two Thai fishing trawlers in international waters. This trafficking route for shipment to Singapore or Malaysia is on the increase, although trafficking through Thailand and China remains most important as transit route to exit South East Asia. Southern China is emerging as the new major area for export of narcotic drugs rather than through Hong Kong.

Historically, Hong Kong was a natural exit point from South East Asia due to its well-developed commercial transport infrastructure. However, Hong Kong as a transit point for shipments of heroin and metamphetamines has decreased over the last years as a consequence of China's construction of new road systems and deep-water ports. However, Hong Kong still remains a rather important transshipment point for drugs and precursors. The same is valid for Singapore, being a major transportation centre and thus an attractive point for drug and precursor transshipment, not least to Indonesia.

River trafficking is also eminent within the region. In May of this year, three men were charged for having smuggled 570,000 metamphetamine pills from Myanmar to Thailand. They used the Mekong River for transporting the illicit drugs and were arrested in Chiang Rai. Meanwhile, another man was arrested for having smuggled 24.5 kg of heroin across the Mekong River at Mae Sai. The 4,200 km Mekong River flows from Tibet, through Southwest China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand and Cambodia and then flows out into the South China Sea through the Mekong Delta in Vietnam. As a result of disputes over demarcations, minor conflicts along the river and the imbalance between material development and the neglect of social development, illegal activities are on the increase along the



Mekong River. Crossborder trafficking of drugs and humans is prominent. Just as crimes at sea cause legal difficulties, so do crimes committed on the Mekong River. For example, there are legal problems regarding border demarcations and water transport jeopardising the river's uncertain legal status.

The needed co-operation between states can be divided into legislative co-operation and operational co-operation. At the moment, some states are neglecting responsibility for vessels flying their flags when committing offences at sea. A better regional co-operation through bilateral or multilateral agreements is therefore a fundamental prerequisite to achieve agreements that would resolve such difficulties within maritime crime. Regional agreements are of particular importance for the Asia Pacific region where the large majority of its oceans and seas lie within so-called exclusive economic zones (EEZs). Regarding legislative co-operation, problems may emerge within the EEZs as certain conventions, as for example the 1988 UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, do not state whether it applies within such zones. According to the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), EEZs should be considered as high seas regarding jurisdiction against

certain types of crimes such as those related to resources and environment.

Regional agreements are, however, needed to apply similar jurisdiction to other offences such as drugs and human trafficking. By using such agreements countries could grant all states a right to search vessels and seize its cargo and crew if there is sufficient evidence that drugs are being trafficked. Moreover, the creation of regional co-operation would stand a better chance of becoming effective if the regional countries already were signatories of existing conventions, showing due respect to their obligations under those conventions, and also if they had domestic legal and institutional arrangements regarding maritime crime.

The new United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime will help to address transnational organised crime and, hopefully, related problems such as maritime crime. This is an encouraging development where the United Nations is taking a major step in the direction of eliminating transnational threats. However, the major problem is that, as long as this Convention has not been signed and ratified by all the region's countries, the authorities and law enforcement agencies still have to rely entirely on the 1988 United Nations Convention

Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and the UNCLOS. These Conventions include provisions of law enforcement efforts, but also provisions for international co-operation regarding transnational maritime crime. However, the exercise of a State's jurisdiction over maritime crime is very complex. It depends on where the offence takes place; in internal waters, in archipelagic waters, in territorial sea, in exclusive economic zones (EEZs), in the high seas, etc. It also depends on the nationality of the vessel, the victim(s), and the offender, as well as on the nature of the offence.

Article 17 of the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was the first to deal specifically with drug trafficking by sea, provides the framework under which states can act against drug traffickers, but only on the high seas; areas not included are, for example, internal waters, archipelagic waters or the EEZs.

However, as maritime crime occurs in all types of zones, jurisdictional difficulties arise. If a vessel only passes through a state's territorial sea to a third country, this state would not be allowed to board the vessel for inspection unless the state

(see more on page 22)

SCHOOL KIDS ON “LEGAL”

Does your child lack the ability to concentrate, to sit still, to get along well in social situations, or speaks out of turn in class? Well, if this is the case, then most psychologists would diagnosis your child with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

ADHD is the most prevalent psychiatric diagnosis of children, yet it is not based on any scientific proof. Children all around the world are currently being diagnosed with ADHD and are drugged with drugs such as Ritalin without any scientific basis. Although there is no basis for this disorder, the APA is willing to acknowledge it as a disorder.

In 1987, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), edition III-R, gave birth to the disorder known as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The decision to recognise it as a disorder was due to a vote made by the psychiatrists that attended a convention. No medical or scientific evidence was given. In fact, at a national consensus conference on ADHD, it was concluded that there was no independent valid test for ADHD, and no data exists that ADHD is due to brain malfunction. Yet, psychiatrists continue to diagnosis children with ADHD based merely on the theory of chemical imbalances in the brain.

Relying on this theory, in the US alone 500,000 children were diagnosed with ADHD in 1988. Just ten years later, psy-

chiatrists diagnosed 4.4 million children; this rate is beaten by today's figure of over 6 million diagnosis. This increase has not only been limited to the US. In New Zealand, the use of one psychiatric drug, Ritalin, rose from 340 in 1993 to nearly 3,000 in 1998 and currently to more than 13,000 children. Ritalin is so often prescribed that the southern region of New Zealand has been dubbed the “Ritalin capital.”

The increase in the use of Ritalin has been aided through governmental and educational financial assistance in the US and in New Zealand to parents and schools that have children with ADHD. Thus, giving parents an extra incentive to have their child on Ritalin. Furthermore, many recent US media reports have insinuated that the push for ADHD diagnosis and the drugs used to “control it” from psychiatrists may have to do with the fact that some drug manufactures fund psychiatrists that research and advocate drugs.

The media's criticism is not the only attacks that psychiatrists and the drug manufactures have faced. In the US, there has been three class-action suits filed against the APA, the psychiatric front group Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD), and Novartis, the manufacturer of Ritalin, alleging that these three are working together to promote a disease that requires narcotic treatment and distribute misleading information to increase the number of diagnoses and prescriptions of Ritalin. At

the class action suits, expert testimony was given as to the harm caused by the use of amphetamines on children. This harm has set various alarm signals off with certain human rights groups.

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), for instance, have argued that such use of Ritalin is against the United Nations convention Article 33, which states that “Children have the right to protection from the use of drugs, and from being involved in producing or distributing them.” Yet, the APA has approved the promotion of the use of a drug, which leaves a child in a comatose like state and has, amongst many others, bouts with suicide during withdrawal as its side effects.

Yangon D ELIMI Museum

Pursuant to the General Assembly resolution aimed at commemorating the signature of the Declaration adopted at the International Conference against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in 1987, all over the world, June 26 is observed as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The Government of Myanmar, in order to stress its anti-narcotics efforts, took the occasion to inaugurate the Yangon Drug Elimination Museum. The museum's exhibits range from photographs to maps of drug trade routes.

The opening remark was delivered by Lt. General Khin Nyunt, Secretary 1 of the national government (State Peace and Development Council). He said the project – reportedly \$1.4 million worth – represents a concrete landmark for his

HARM REDUCTION in Chiang Mai

The Asian Harm Reduction Network (AHRN) together with the International Harm Reduction Association (IHRA) will be hosting the 13th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm in Chiang Mai in 2002. The objective of this conference is to bring together key players in the area of reduction of the health, social and economic harm associated with drugs.

DRUGS

As if the side effects were not enough to worry about, Ritalin has and still is sold on the streets. In many major cities in Canada, Ritalin became widely available on the black market just a year after the APA recognised it as a disorder. The drug is now widely available because of the rush effect it gives. In fact, the demand for it is so big that children are selling their prescriptions. Thus, this craze has transformed very active children to drugged children and, in some instances, to drug dealers. All this transformation is due to a disorder that is based on no scientific proof.

– **Artemis Moutsatsos,**
UNDCP, Bangkok

DRUG NATION

country's efforts to combat narcotics. His speech highlighted the efforts to eradicate opium production by year 2005 in the northern regions of the country as well as the national 15-year master plan (1999-2014) for total elimination of narcotic drugs. Lt. General Khin Nyunt also said that Myanmar is firmly resolved to achieve the later goal "with or without the international community's assistance".

UNDCP was invited to attend the inauguration ceremony and Mr. Lemahieu, UNDCP Representative, delivered the message of Mr. Kofi Annan on the occasion of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. On behalf of UNDCP, he also donated to CCDAC a contribution of 150,000 Kyats (approximately \$250) to support the national art competition for drug abuse prevention.

AUSTRALIA'S PLANS FOR DRUG CONTROL IN EAST ASIA: The Australian Ambassador Speaks Out!

In recent years, the world has seen how easily stability of law and order can break down under the pressure of organised crime. What lessons do you think the international community can learn from these events?

The most important lesson is that transnational crime is a growing problem which, as you point out, undermines law and order. The best way of tackling that problem is to improve co-operation among governments and international agencies so that we can present a united front against the organised criminals who are responsible for transnational crime. This is especially the case where organised crime has targeted those countries which are already weakened because of internal conflict. In those countries, governments are often unable to devote resources to tackling transnational crime. It is therefore incumbent on the international community as a whole to assist where it can in tackling the activities of organised criminals at the source, because there will inevitably be a spill-over of those activities to other countries. Individual countries cannot adopt a "do-it-alone" approach. Only international co-operation will be effective in combating transnational crime.

What are the main strategic innovations proposed by the new Australian policy on international drug control?

An effective strategy has to recognise that effective international drug control lies beyond the confines of any one jurisdiction. The Australian Government is keen to maximise its co-operation with governments and agencies involved in the fight against transnational crime as part of a comprehensive strategy to deal with the drug trade. Australia sees this as a central element of our collective efforts to eliminate that trade. Experience has demonstrated that co-operation with UN agencies can be a major element in the development and implementation of well-targeted and co-ordinated policies that meet this objective. Australia's assistance to UNDCP is evidence of our strong commitment to support activities that ensure such approaches to the task of can be improved and expanded.

Within Australia's comprehensive strategy there is also emphasis given to a balanced approach to all the aspects of the drug issue: demand reduction; alternative development opportunities (crop substitution); law enforcement; legislative measures; harm minimisation programs and widespread education campaigns. Domestically, Australia has adopted a "whole of Government" approach to the subject to ensure that there



His Excellency Mr. Miles Kupa: the Australian Ambassador in Thailand

is the highest level of collaboration between Government agencies and different levels of Government in Australia including law enforcement, customs and development co-operation.

What role will Australia play in the future regional co-operation against drugs and crime in East Asia and the Pacific?

Australia's authorities are working closely with regional and national organisations in the region. Both the Minister for Justice and Customs, the Hon Chris Ellison, MP, and the AFP Police Commissioner, Mick Keelty, have visited the region recently to enhance linkages and co-operation between Australia and other regional countries in combating organised crime. The practical results of these enhanced linkages can be seen in the rapid growth in the number of training activities conducted in the region, as well as the sharp rise in major joint operations by Asia Pacific authorities and agencies. Those joint operations have been particularly effective in combating illicit drug and people trafficking, two of the most pernicious threats to the security of countries in the region. Furthermore, AusAid is in constant contact with national and international authorities to provide assistance to the areas where illicit crops are grown. We are also particularly glad to host the next Asia Pacific meeting of HONLEA (Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement) in Sydney in mid-October.



The crowd at the Siam Discovery Centre

SPORTS End DRUGS in Bangkok

On the 26th of June 2001, the UNDCP regional centre co-hosted, together with the Siam Discovery Centre, an event commemorating the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. This internationally recognised day was pronounced, for the first time, by the UN General Assembly in 1987.

This year's theme for the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was *Sports End Drugs*. Through sport, people can develop will power, acquire self-confidence and learn to overcome life's obstacles with courage and firmness. Many of the UNDCP's programmes around the world have a connection with sport. Helping the world's children to spend their youth within sports complexes and on the playgrounds rather than on the streets where drugs are omnipresent.

The yearly remembrance of this day is a symbol of the United Nations strength of mind to win the war on drugs by rein-

forcing their actions by increased co-operation and commitment to this purpose. However, despite many optimistic achievements within this struggle there is still a lot of progress to be made. The need to continue this war on drugs is underpinned by the celebration of this day.

The event was the fruitful outcome of a new co-operative effort. The UNDCP and its co-operative partners joined together with the common goal of raising awareness of the threat narcotics poses on the future of today's youth. These partnerships' assistance and contribution made the events of the international day possi-

ble. The private sector, through various sports companies, also took part in supporting a drug-free world, and a percentage of their sales revenues made during the 26th of June was donated to the Thai Red Cross Society programme entitled "The Red Cross Volunteer Student Leaders in Anti-Drug Abuse".

Several inspiring and interesting speeches were held throughout the event. Khun Chadatip Chutrakul, the Managing Director of Bangkok Intercontinental Hotels Company Limited, held the welcome speech and spoke about the co-operative effort that enabled this day.



The Minister of Public Health, Ms. Sudarat Keyuraphan, leads the group



Staff of the UNDCP regional centre receiving visitors

Thereafter, Mr. Kim Hak-Su, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific, delivered the statement the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan prepared for this event. Mr. Kofi Annan called for the need of a greater focus on young people. He underlined sport as an agent of positive change. "Where drug abuse destroys bodies and minds, sport makes them stronger and healthier. Where drug abuse undermines incentive, sport involves striving for excellence. Where drug abuse threatens relationships, sport enables participation. And where drug abuse preys on aimlessness, sport offers young people focus and structure."

The following speaker was Mr. Sandro Calvani, the Representative of the UNDCP Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific who spoke about the rampant drug abuse in the Asian region and the powerful tool that sports can serve to install values and principles amongst Asian youth. He also announced the new Sports Youth Messenger, Ms. Tamarine Tanasugarn, who is the first young lady and first Asian person ever to have gained this title. She will from now on join hands with the UNDCP and the civil society in the battle against young peoples' drug abuse. Ms. Tamarine Tanasugarn was not able to come and join the celebration of this day as she was practising for the Wimbledon



tennis tournament where she performed well.

The Thai Red Cross Society's efforts to combat drug abuse were, subsequently, presented by the Director of the Red Cross Volunteers Bureau, Professor Damrong Reinprayoon, followed by a key note address by his excellence General Tammarak Israngkool Na Ayuthaya from the Prime Minister's Office. The Thai government's efforts in the battle against drugs in the region were outlined.

The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Traffic also marked the climax for the participants of the "Traffic against Drugs" bicycle campaign. The bicycle race started off on June 9th from the United Nations Building with the purpose of promoting public awareness and community participation against drugs. The participants headed to the Northeast, the North and West of Thailand where they collected signatures against drugs and, thereby, signalling their non-acceptance of narcotics entering their communities.

This initiative was very much appreciated as it signifies a successful partnership between the civil society and the United Nations. Many more such initiatives are hoped for in the future. The head of the bicycle team, Dr. Yongyuth Mayalarp, explained the details of the campaign and submitted the list of signatures collected.

The second part of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Traffic was dedicated to an animated show with performances in dance by the Discovery Club, in acrobatics by Bangkok University's cheerleaders and in singing by the popular artists JR and Nancy. This part of the day was very much appreciated, particularly by the young audience. Overall, the event was well attended, inspirational and, hopefully, it will, together with the linked initiatives such as the bicycle race, encourage further awareness raising events and numerous initiatives between the civil society and the United Nations as far as a future drug-free world is concerned.

- Claire Smellie, UNDCP, Bangkok

LIGHTS ON all over Indonesia



The roundabout by Hotel Indonesia is the favourite place for demonstrations in Jakarta. On June 26, 2001 the place became the focal point for the "LIGHTS ON" project. LIGHTS ON is a project done by UNDCP and Yayasan Cinta Anak Bangsa (YCAB), a NGO in Jakarta, to commemorate the 2001 International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

It started with a challenge by Mr. Sandro Calvani, Representative of UNDCP Regional Office in Bangkok, to YCAB during his brief visit to YCAB's office in Jakarta. The idea was very simple: car drivers would be asked to switch on their lights at certain hours on 26 June 2001 if they were against drug abuse. To get the project going, YCAB worked together with National Narcotics Coordinating Board of Indonesia (NNCB-I), the national police force, the highway transport and traffic bureau, and the local government. In Indonesia it is against the law to switch on vehicle lights in the day time, therefore the cooperation of these agencies was vital.

The success of this project would rely heavily on promotions. Extra Joss, a local health drink brand, helped us with the funding for TV and newspapers advertisements. One day before the event, a press conference was held at the NNCB-I office, attended by Mr. Wayne Bazant from UNDCP, Insp. Gen. Ahwil Lutan, the executive director of NNCB, and Mr. Sukirno Tarjadi, Secretary General of YCAB.

At the press conference, the police force gave the assurance that drivers would not be fined for switching on their lights in day time on that day. The next day major newspapers carried half-page advertisements by Extra Joss, urging people to be involved in this campaign. We decided that the event would be done twice during rush hours, one from 08:30 to 09:00 in the morning, and the second one from 16:30 to 17:00 in the afternoon.

Jakarta

In Jakarta we got approximately 150 volunteers ready to distribute 100,000 anti drug flyers and brochures and to invite drivers to switch on their lights. As most of these volunteers were school students, we asked them to help us in the afternoon only.

The response in the morning was luke-



More than 90% of the cars switched on their lights

Distribution of flyers to encourage drivers to turn their LIGHTS ON

warm, as drivers were very cautious. As we noticed, there were probably 20% of cars that had the lights on. It was a different story in the afternoon, however, as our volunteers went to approach car drivers waiting for traffic lights. They gave out brochures and asked the drivers to switch on

their car lights if they support our effort to fight drug abuse.

As captured in photos and video cameras, more than 90% of cars moving along the Sudirman and Thamrin boulevards switched on their lights. In other places in the city of Jakarta, car drivers switched on



Drivers assured; nobody will be fined for switching on their lights

commemoration of this anti drug day with drivers switching on their lights on the appointed time.

In the city of Medan (North Sumatra), about 1200 km from Jakarta, the governor and the regional police chief appeared before the TV camera to express their support for the event. The 26th of June has never been commemorated in such a massive way before in Indonesia.

YCACB would like to thank Mr. Calvani and UNDCP for initiating and partly funding this project. We also thank the NNCB-I and the other government agencies, the media, the sponsor and those car drivers who took part in this project. Without their help this event would not have been such a success.

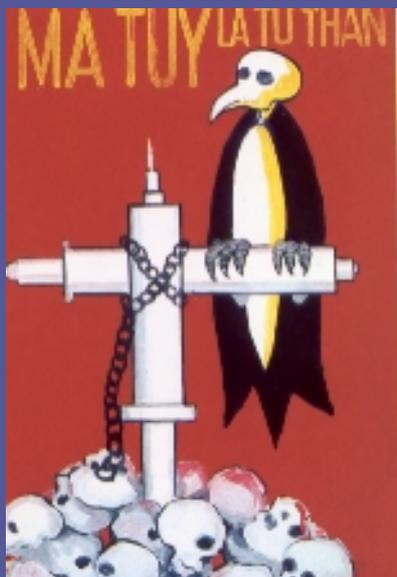
– Information provided by YCACB, Indonesia

their lights to show their moral support for anti drug campaigns. The event was reported in major TV and radio stations and newspapers.

Other Indonesian cities

Local TV stations in the cities of Medan, Yogyakarta, Makassar, Madiun, and several other cities in Indonesia reported the

ARTS AGAINST DRUGS



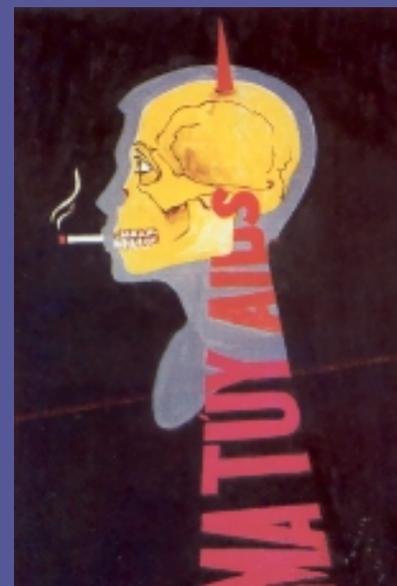
For the International Day Against Drug Abuse, 26 June 2001, UNDCP - in collaboration with the National Committee on Aids, Drugs and Prostitution Control (NCADP) - hosted an exhibition of images that are usually seen in passing only: the drug control posters of the roadside.

The purpose of anti-drug publicity is to inform and warn the public of the dangers of drugs and drug use. Posters, which are simple in style and cheap to reproduce, are the media most

widely utilized for this purpose. Throughout the world, posters have developed into an accepted art form, within which the anti-drug poster occupies a specific place with its often gloomy imagery and the inherent difficulty of conveying a negative message: DON'T TAKE DRUGS.

In Vietnam, the tradition of poster-art has developed from the agit-prop application, modeled on the Soviet-Style, to forms peculiar and specific to Vietnamese artists, expressing in this collection of anti-drug posters their perception of drugs, drug users and drug use consequences.

Drug use - and, hence, drug control - is culturally specific. Thus, the issues to be dealt with are not only legal, economic, political and social, but cultural as well. Without addressing the cultural specificity of drug use and drug control, UNDCP's work would be unfocused and of limited effectiveness. This exhibition aims to em-



phasize one aspect of the cultural dimension of drug control work in Viet Nam.

The posters shown in the exhibition were made by students from the Colleges of Fine Arts of Hanoi and of HCMC in 1999 for a similar occasion and the Ministry of Culture and Information has provided them for this exhibition.

– Doris Buddenberg, UNDCP Representative, Vietnam

Cambodia marks INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUGS



Anti-drug messages in the Khmer language were erected throughout Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh for the July 26 event

Cambodia celebrated the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking by holding a ceremony in the seaport town of Sihanoukville. Those attending the morning's event included staff of the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD), including the Secretary General, H.E. Lt. Gen. Em Sam An, together with representatives from the US Embassy, Japanese National Police, UN agencies, international and local NGO's and several hundred secondary school children and teachers.

The keynote speech was given by H.E. Maj. Gen. You Sunlong, Deputy Sec-

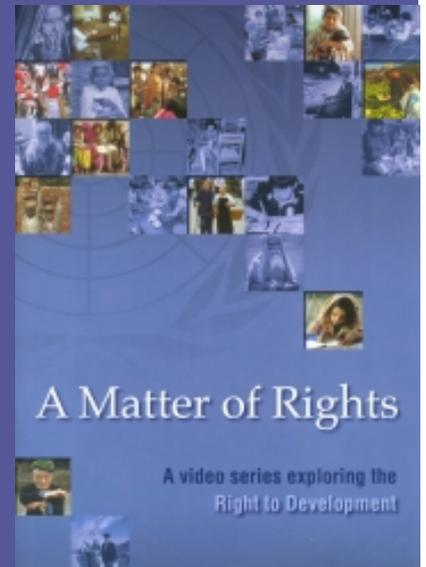
retary-General of the NACD, on behalf of the Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Sar Kheng. In his address, Sar Kheng stated that, "the Government has noticed with concern that the rapid evolution of the drug problem in Cambodia, along with the growing spread of AIDS, poses a great danger to the Cambodian people". He added, "the Royal Government has set its clear position on participation in cooperation to control and suppress drug trafficking, production and cross-border drug movements" and noted that, "without participation of the people from all walks of life, we cannot expect to succeed in tackling this complicated problem".

ODCCP, which recently opened a Liaison Office in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, provided financial support to the event, as did a variety of private sponsors. Street banners, placards, t-shirts and caps were used to raise awareness of the dangers of drugs. The event was televised on Cambodian TV and reported widely in Cambodian language newspapers.



We want to live in a drug free society

A matter of rights



Development is not a privilege granted to a few, but a fundamental human right. This right was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly back in 1986. However, for many, development still seems far away.

To stress the fact that the right to development is a basic human right, which many unfortunately do not seem to enjoy, UN/ESCAP has produced 52 five-minute videos emphasizing the right to development. Through the prism, of social and economic issues in the Asia and Pacific region, the series explores different facets of the right to development, from the basic provision of safe potable water to healthy lifestyles for older persons, in an attempt to both explain and popularize it as a concept.

The entire series of five-minutes videos is presented in the folder *A Matter of Rights*, which also has been produced by UN/ESCAP. The folder includes a VCD which contains selected videos from the series. The folder is available from UN/ESCAP, Rajdamrn Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand. Telephone: (+66-2) 288 1234, Fax: (+66-2) 288 1052, E-mail: unisbkk.unescap@un.org, Website: <http://www.unescap.org>

MILLION VOICES

The Indonesian NGO YCAB (Yayasan Cinta Anak Bangsa) that works for a drug free Indonesia has made a song and video clip illustrating the dangers of drug abuse. They believe that if prevention is the strategy employed, the war on drugs can be won. However, commitment is needed across all levels of society and it is only through compassion that something can be done. The video clip aims at just this – achieving compassion within society.

It tells the story about an Indonesian youngster who starts taking drugs as a child. As he grows up into a young man his drug addiction also grows. He ends up in a rehabilitation centre where he suffers from despair, anger, emptiness, sorrow and pain. Thoughts of his girlfriend who died in his arms as a result of an overdose only adds to his anguish and the hopelessness of his situation, putting him into a state of indifference as far as his own life is concerned. He flees from the centre and ends up being hit by a car.

However, the pain due to the accident is negligent compared to the pain his life situation as an addict causes him and, so, he runs on. At the end of the clip he ar-

rives at the tomb of his girlfriend where, in his mind's eye, he sees his life passing by until the day he first tried drugs. As he dies, the last image reminds us about the need for caring people to help the young make other choices than drugs. A little girl offers her hand to a little boy and, thereby, helps him to leave the drug squat and turn his back to drugs. Many choices are made when one is young and with the support and help of others the greater is the chance that the right choices will be made.

The song talks about the chains that are wrapped around drug users' brains and the need of such addicts to regain the liberty of their minds. The song expresses the feelings of being lost and the absence of peace of mind and the need of a compassionate society in order to help addicts regain knowledge of the meaning of life. There are a million voices out there waiting for compassion, waiting to be heard and, by writing this song and creating this video clip, the YCAB are ensuring that they have done their part in making these voices heard.

– *Claire Smellie, UNDCP, Bangkok*

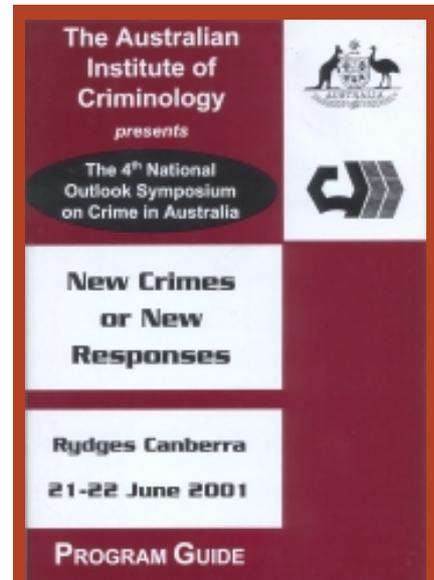
OPIUM PRODUCTION ON DECLINE – Steady decrease in Laos

The full survey report for this year has not yet been officially released by UNDCP Headquarters, but it is agreed that in Lao PDR, there has been a 9.5% reduction in the area under poppy cultivation, from 19,052 hectares in 2000 to 17,255 hectares in 2001. The actual opium production fell even sharper. However, the reliable indicator for monitoring the elimination of opium production is to monitor the areas under poppy cultivation.

Yield is dependant on vagaries, such as weather, and would therefore be unreliable as an achievement indicator,

since weather conditions can cause annual figures of opium production to fluctuate drastically.

The results confirm the downward trend that we have been observing in recent years. However, for it to be sustainable, the international community needs to push ahead with alternative development simultaneously. Alternative development projects in the provinces where opium poppy cultivation is concentrated have already been formulated and are ready to come into being, only awaiting donor funding. Why wait?

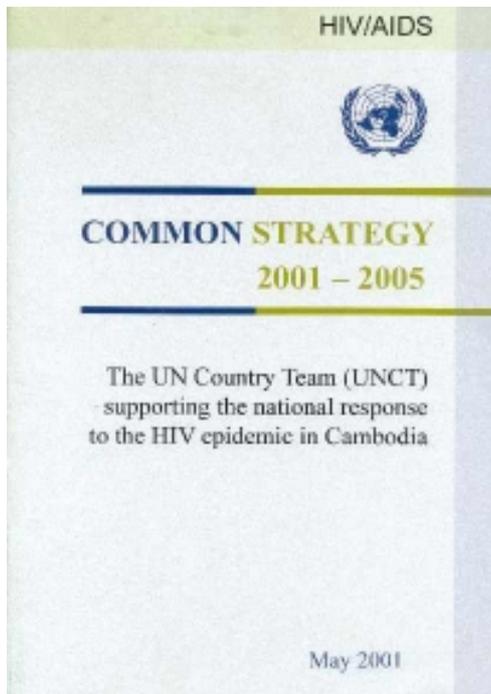


CRIME BUSTERS CONFERENCE

A conference titled New Crimes or New Responses was convened in Canberra Australia on 21-22 June 2001. Among the issues discussed at the conference were Sentencing and Prosecution, Domestic Violence, Illicit Drugs and Crime, Transnational Crime, Fraud Computer Crime, and Cross Border Crime. A key note address was made by UN/ODCCP Executive Director Mr. Pino Arlacchi, who spoke about the Scope and Responses to Transnational Crime.

ASEAN strongly welcomes the ACCORD Plan of Action

At the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held in Hanoi 23-24 July the participants agreed to strongly welcome the endorsement of the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) Plan of Action by the International Congress in Pursuit of a Drug-Free ASEAN 2015. The ASEAN members confirmed their commitment to strengthen coordination by proactively advocating awareness of the danger of drugs, by response building consensus, by sharing best practices on demand reduction, by strengthening the rule of law through improved law enforcement cooperation and legislative review, as well as by eliminating the supply of illicit drugs by boosting alternative development program and community participation in the eradication of illicit crops.



Common Strategy 2001-2005: The UN Country Team (UNCT) Supporting the National Response to the HIV Epidemic in Cambodia, Phnom Penh: UNCT, 2001. The 37 pages long report outlines the national framework and lessons learned in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Cambodia as well as the strategy agenda covering the next five years for the UNCT. The report highlights the tremendous challenge the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Cambodia constitutes and stresses what must and can be done to face it.

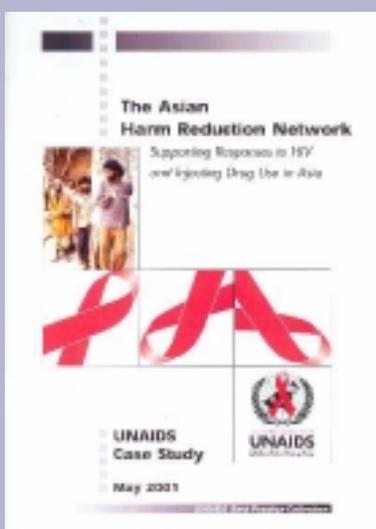
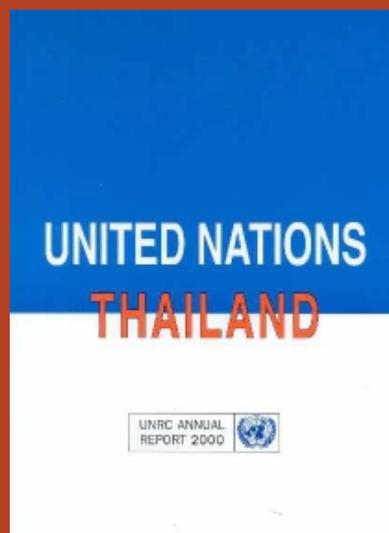
The report is available from the Office of the Resident Coordinator in Cambodia, No. 53, Rue Pastur, Boeng Keng Kang, P.O. Box 877, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Tel.: (+855-23) 216 167 or (+855-23) 427 718, Fax: (+855-23) 721 042 or (+855-23) 216 257, E-mail: registry@undp.forum.org.kh



MANA Update, Mayangone Township: MANA, 2001. The folder gives the reader an introduction to Myanmar Anti Narcotics Association- MANA's activities, which include demand reduction projects, AIDS prevention programmes, youth education and social volunteer programmes. The folder is available from MANA, Building (3), Room 101/102 Myaing Hay Wun Housing Estate, Kyaik Waing Pagoda Road, Mayangone Township, Myanmar.

United Nations Thailand: UNRC Annual Report 2000, Bangkok: UNRC, 2001. The report gives an introduction to both the socio-economic situation in Thailand and the different UN agencies activities across the country. Of specific interest to people engaged in drug control activities it can be mentioned that the report deals with the activities of the UNDCP Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific as well as important cross cutting issues such as HIV/AIDS and Trafficking of Women and Children and Governance and Human Rights.

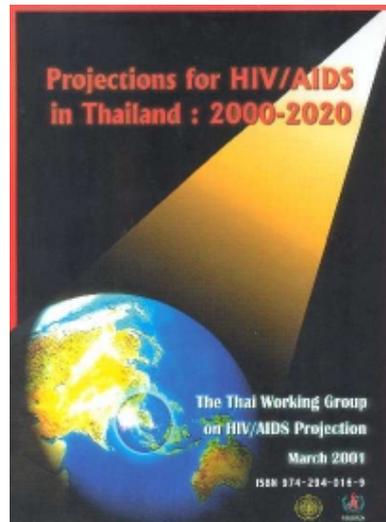
The report is available from the Inter-Agency Support Unit (IASU), Office of the Resident Coordinator (UNRC), 12th Floor, United Nations Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand, Telephone: (+66-2) 288 1836, Fax: (+66-2) 280 0556, E-mail: unrc@un.or.th, Homepage: <http://www.un.or.th>



The Asian Harm Reduction Network: Supporting Responses to HIV and Injecting Drug Use in Asia, Geneva: UNAIDS, 2001. This report conducted by UNAIDS analyses the impact of Asian Harm Reduction Network (AHRN) on the spread of HIV/AIDS among drug users. Most countries of the region are not yet ready to implement programmes for the prevention of HIV/AIDS among drug users; rather, at this stage, these countries require advocacy tools. Consequently, AHRN's main activities include advocacy and assistance in policy development. AHRN organized and participated in numerous meetings and workshops with the goal of establishing a suitable environment for effective policies and programmes for the prevention of HIV/AIDS among drug users. AHRN assisted in drafting policy guidelines and recommendations, and worked closely with various intergovernmental organizations. Conclusively, the report states that the example of AHRN shows that, thanks to the interactions of its members, the impact of an open network can be stronger than the sum of its components.

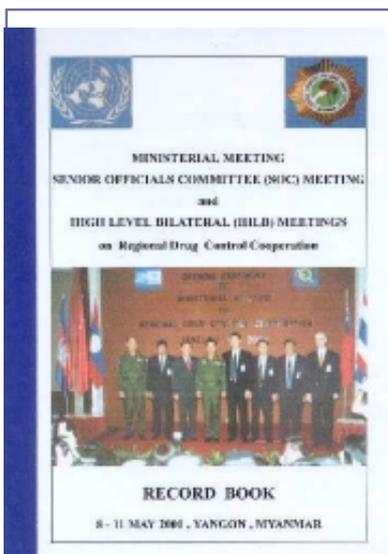
More information is available in the report, which can be requested from UNAIDS, 20 avenue Appia, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland, Telephone: (+4122) 791 46 51, Fax: (+4122) 791 41 87, E-mail: unaids@unaids.org, Webpage: <http://www.unaids.org>

Projections for HIV/AIDS in Thailand: 2000-2020, Bangkok: The Thai Working Group on HIV/AIDS Projection, 2001. The comprehensive book is written in Thai and English. Among other important issues the book describes the present situation regarding HIV/AIDS infections in Thailand and forecasts the development of the next 20 years. The current state of the epidemic is that 984,000 people have been infected with HIV, 289,000 have died and 29,000 new infections will occur this year. More information is available in the book, which can be requested from Division of AIDS, Department of Communicable Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, Nonthaburi 11000, Thailand, Phone: (+66-2) 590 3208, 590 3209, 590 3219, 591 8411, 591 8412, Fax: (+66-2) 590 3210, 591 8413, Web page: <http://aids.cdc.moph.go.th>



The latest Publications DISTRIBUTED BY UNDCP BANGKOK

- 1/2001 National Workshop for Cross-Border Law Enforcement Cooperation in East Asia (AD/RAS/99/D91)
- 2/2001 First Annual Meeting of the Mutual Legal Assistance Advisory Committee (MLAAC)-AD/RAS/97/C74
- 3/2001 Fellowship Programme in Malaysia 04 September-10 October 2000 (AD/RAS/97/C74)
- 4/2001 Participants Database: Seminars, Workshops and Meeting for 1st Phase of Development of Cross-Border Law Enforcement Cooperation in East Asia (AD/RAS/99/D91) (12 November 1999- 15 January 2001)
- 5/2001 Review of High Risk Groups in China - Urumqi and Yining, Xinjiang Autonomous Region (Urumqi-Yining, 15-19 September 2000) (AD/RAS/98/C75)
- 6/2001 Directory of Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services, East Asia and the Pacific
- 7/2001 Eliminating Opium: Lessons from Succeeding in Thailand
- 8/2001 Cross-Border Law Enforcement Cooperation Meeting/Workshop (AD/RAS/99/D91)
- 9/2001 Status of Donor Contributions to Regional Programmes as of December 2000
- 10/2001 Eastern Horizons No. 5 March 2001
- 11/2001 Cambodia Country Profile
- 12/2001 Pacific Islands Regional Profile
- 13/2001 Injecting Drug Use and HIV Vulnerability: Choices and Consequences in Asia and the Pacific
- 14/2001 Report on Workshop "A Partnership with United Nations in A World Class Training Project", Bangkok, Thailand, 24-25 April 2001
- 15/2001 What they said: Press Clippings: Ministerial and Senior Officials Committee Meetings on Drug Control, Yangon, 9-11 May 2001
- 16/2001 Eastern Horizons No.6 June 2001
- 17/2001 Sports and Drugs (Press Kit), International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, 26 June 2001
- 18/2001 Annual Field Report 2000
- 19/2001 Regional Profile 2000
- 20/2001 Global Impact of the Ban on Opium Production in Afghanistan



Record Book: Ministerial Meeting: Senior Officials Committee (SOC) Meeting and High Level Bilateral (HILB) Meetings on Regional Drug Control Cooperation, Yangon: CCDAC, 2001. The full proceedings, key speeches, and other important documents from the meetings held in Yangon 8-11 May 2001 has been compiled and distributed by CCDAC (Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control). Copies can be requested from CCDAC, Fax: (+95-1) 549-284.



APG: Asia / Pacific Group on Money Laundering: First Annual report 1999 - 2000, Sydney: APG Secretariat, 2001. The first annual report from APG gives a view of the activities of APG during the year 1999 - 2000. It provides the reader with a regional snapshot of anti-money laundering measures in the Asia/Pacific and also outlines the directions and priorities for the future. The report is available from APG Secretariat, 1st Floor, 201 Elizabeth Street, Sydney 2000, Australia, Phone: (+61-2) 9373 2438, Fax: (+61-2) 9373 2499, E-mail: mail@apgml.org

The above documents can be obtained through the website of UNDCP Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific (<http://www.undcp.un.or.th>)

Together WE CAN

Together we can is the title of UNAIDS' most recent publication dealing with the AIDS issue. Keeping in mind that AIDS by now has been known for 20 years, an evaluation of past efforts and directions for future activities are included among the subjects discussed in the publication. The issues are discussed in a comprehensive and very informative way stressing the point that HIV/AIDS is not only a health issue, but also an issue of development and good governance. As it is stated by the UN Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan in the preface: "Where it takes hold, the AIDS epidemic feeds on existing economic and social problems.

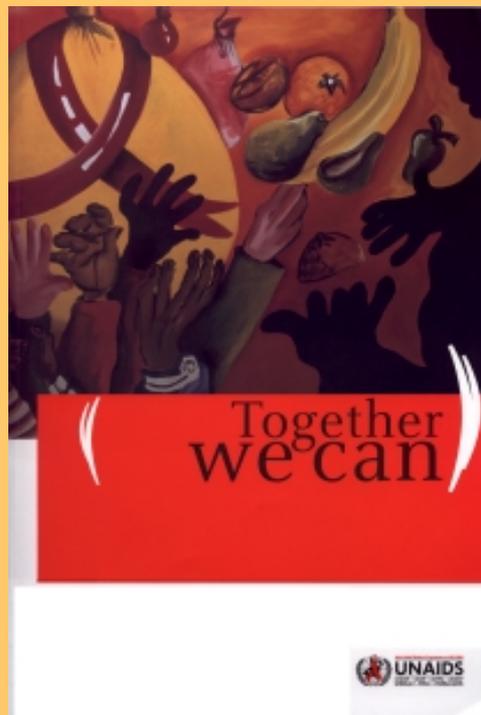
Ultimately, the test of our leadership will be how decisively we address the enduring poverty, inequality and inadequate infrastructures that are the enablers of this terrible disease. It is only by doing so that we can empower individuals, communities and countries to play their full part as leaders in the fight against HIV/AIDS."

The challenge humanity is facing does also call for good leadership. HIV/AIDS is triggering national emergencies around the globe. It is destroying the lives of individuals and communities, wiping out hard-earned economic and social development gains and threatening social and political stability.

However, as it is described in the publication, the HIV/AIDS epidemic can be slowed down, even reversed. The epidemic will yield to potent responses. The challenge is to constantly and decisively deliver these responses at a consequent and global scale.

For more information please see:

Together We Can, Geneva: UNAIDS, 2001. Available from UNAIDS, 20 Avenue Appia, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, Phone: (+41 22) 791 46 51, Fax: (41 22) 791 41 87, E-mail: unaids@unaids.org Web page: <http://www.unaids.org>



Maritime and riparian drug trafficking

(continued from page 11)

could prove that the mere presence of this vessel affects the peace of the coastal state. Due to such complexities, it is easy to see how organised criminal groups can take advantage of loopholes within the jurisdiction. In an effort to address this problem, the UN adopted a resolution in 1998 addressing the issue of illicit traffic by sea which recommended the implementation of bilateral and multilateral agreements to increase regional co-operation concerning this problem and the promotion of common maritime law enforcement procedures.

Legal reforms are not the only answer to the problem. At the operational level limited resources will have to be more efficiently used to implement a better communications network and worldwide intelligence system. Restrictions on information exchange due to questions of sovereignty and liability need to be overhauled.

Some countries' lack of resources to effectively combat drug trafficking may be overcome by permitting operational assistance by neighbouring countries law enforcement personnel. Already available resources such as the military's national security personnel and equipment should, in times of peace, be permitted by national laws to support the counter-narcotic efforts, as was done in the case of the seizure in the Andaman Sea.

Also, more detailed information needs to be made available about the operational aspects of successful seizures along the Mekong River and at Sea in order to establish the most effective ways of combating drug trafficking by maritime means. Finally, the private sector, for example, exporters and carriers, together with the port authorities, also need to become more involved in the counter-narcotic efforts.

Thus, increased co-operation within the

Southeast Asian region is a prerequisite to overcome the threat of drug trafficking on seas and rivers. Such an increase of co-operation is already facilitated by the UNDCP through arranging workshops and involving existent and future projects for such a purpose. At the end of last year an informal working group on maritime co-operation met in Vienna during which subjects, such as what practical measures to use in order to eliminate maritime trafficking and how to increase the co-operation regarding this problem, were treated.

Furthermore, the implementation of a specific project dealing with the elimination of trafficking along the Mekong River has been discussed, but, in the meantime, UNDCP projects such as *Cross Border Law Enforcement Co-operation* work to such an effect.

– **Claire Smellie, UNDCP, Bangkok**



Participants of the seminar

Colombo plan secretariat MOVES TOWARD ATS PREVENTION in the region

Amphetamine-type stimulant abuse was the key issue surrounding a recent regional seminar on prevention in East and South East Asian. The one-week event tackled strategic issues and solutions toward prevention in schools, workplaces and community settings.

The seminar was organized and funded through the Drug Advisory Programme of the Colombo Plan Secretariat.

Locally hosted in Manila from 21 –25 May by the Dangerous Drugs Board, with technical expertise from the Philippines and the UNDCP Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, national delegates

from ASEAN member countries as well as China and the Republic of Korea, systematically reviewed the regional and national ATS abuse trends and identified priority target groups in each social sector. They also established strategic objectives that were translated into national work plans. The event also attracted considerable local media attention since civil unrest in Manila during the previous week had been partly attributed to the abuse of ATS.

– **Wayne Bazant, Demand Reduction Advisor, UNDCP, Bangkok**

TRILATERAL MEETING on drug control

Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam signed a Joint Declaration on Drug Control Co-operation on the 13th June, 2001, after having concluded their trilateral meeting that focused on further counter-narcotic co-operation.

On the 12th June 12, 2001, senior officials from Cambodia separately held meetings with high-level officials from Laos and Vietnam on the effective fighting against drug-related activities and reached the consensus of strengthening their co-operation when dealing

with drug problems.

These meetings reflect the efforts and determination of drug authorities of the three countries to expand their friendly co-operation in order to prevent production, trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs.

The continuous increase of co-operation in the area between Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam is a step towards a Drug Free ASEAN in 2015 – a goal which, recently, was set up at an international congress in Bangkok.

PERSONALIA

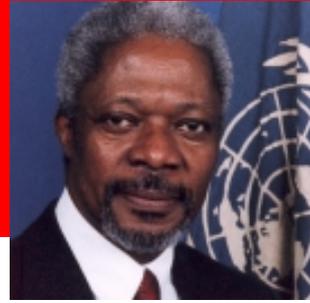
Ms Narumi Yamada (Japan) has recently joined us as our Senior Programme Management Officer. She brings with her over 10 years of operational work experience in Asia and the Pacific within the UNDCP. Previously, she was Officer-in-Charge of the South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific Programme at UNDCP headquarters in Vienna. Prior to that she served this UNDCP Regional Centre as Assistant Director at the time of its creation in 1992. She has also worked for the ILO and within the management-consulting field. We wish her luck with her new assignment.

Miss Lise Bendiksen (Norway) joined the Regional Centre in July as an intern from Norway. Ms. Lise Bendiksen holds an MA in Political Science from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver with focus on international relations, ethics and security. Before joining the Regional Centre as an intern she worked at the Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN with development, social and human rights issues, the drug resolution being one of her responsibilities. She holds teaching assistant positions at the University of Oslo and does consulting (evaluations of project activities) for the World Bank.

Mr Bengt Juhlin (Sweden) our Senior Programme Co-ordinator has left the Regional Centre to start up the ODCCP Liaison Office in Cambodia. He will be the Head of the Office and serve as the Senior Programme Management Co-ordinator for the project titled *Strengthening the Secretariat of the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) and the National Drug Control Programme of Cambodia*. We wish him and the Liaison Office in Cambodia success and all the best.

Mr Shogo Kanamori, (Japan) our Associate Expert, has left the Regional Centre after having served here for two years. Mr. Shogo Kanamori has now changed his duty station and will serve the headquarters in Vienna during the final year of his contract. The Regional Centre looks forward to a continued positive co-operation with the headquarters, not least through our former associate expert. Good luck Shogo!

Together we can



The HIV/AIDS epidemic has penetrated every region of the world. In some countries, its devastating passage is only beginning. In others, it is unraveling decades of progress and deepening fault lines that already divide societies. The toll on human life is extreme. This is a global crisis that demands global action.

Two decades of efforts have provided the insights needed to turn the epidemic around.

Leadership at all levels and in all walks of life is vital. But political and other top-level leaders bear a special responsibility to set the examples that spur others into action. Their persistent commitment is essential in guaranteeing that coherent national plans operate effectively and that sufficient resources are channeled into responses. It must also ensure that the actions straddle different sectors and involve as many actors as possible.

Effective responses draw guidance and inspiration from the activities of communities, with particular focus on young people and women. The best of them closely involve people living with HIV/AIDS and those affected by the epidemic.

The success stories underscore the fact that the protection of human (including social and economic) rights is essential. They confirm the need to tackle, nationally and internationally, the many disparities that fuel the epidemic. And they prove the utility and importance of the links between strong prevention, care and support programmes.

“We face a terrible epidemic, but we are far from powerless against it. We can halt the spread of AIDS. We can even reverse it ... Above all, the challenge of AIDS is a test of leadership. Leadership has formed the basis of whatever progress we have achieved so far. I am thinking of individuals who spoke out in the earliest days of the disease—at times quite provocatively—in order to get the issue onto the agenda. Or the many citizens’ groups that have overcome obstacles of shame, stigma and taboo to provide essential services and support. Or men and women in the private sector who have recognized that the struggle against AIDS makes good business sense, and have taken steps to protect their employees. Or scientists dedicated to the pursuit of a safe and effective vaccine.”

Kofi A. Annan, United Nations Secretary-General

We know
what has to be done.
We know what works.
NOW
is the time to act.