



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

**For Immediate Release**

## Heads of Asia-Pacific drug law enforcement meet in Bangkok to address growing drug production and trafficking problem

Over 140 law enforcement, public security and United Nations officials have gathered in Bangkok for a major conference to discuss solutions to the growing drug production, trafficking and use problem in the Asia – Pacific region.

Despite intense efforts illicit drugs remain among the highest-value transnational crime commodities produced and trafficked in the Asia-Pacific region with most countries reporting increases in seizures and supply. Synthetic drugs like methamphetamine are produced across West, South and East and Southeast Asia. At the same time heroin continues to be produced at high levels in Afghanistan, and in the Golden Triangle mainly in Myanmar. Both synthetic drugs and opiates like heroin continue to generate enormous profits for transnational organized crime, and in some parts of Asia – Pacific the profits fund and drive conflict.

The conference is considering how rapid regional economic integration may be changing production and trafficking patterns. Law enforcement and integrated border management approaches are being debated to ensure solutions are put in place so governments can work together effectively at borders and on joint operations.

"The transnational organized crime economy in Southeast Asia alone is conservatively estimated at USD \$100 billion per year with drugs over one third of the value. And if the chemicals used to make drugs were included it would be far higher." said Mr. Jeremy Douglas, Regional Representative of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime ([UNODC](#)) for Southeast Asia and the Pacific. "Profits from drug trafficking across Asia – Pacific are growing and destabilizing parts of the region."

"Without integrated law enforcement and border management strategies organized crime groups will continue to expand the drug business in the Asia- Pacific region without respect for the sovereignty of states. The illicit drug business is a threat to regional integration efforts and causes harm to communities and people across the region," said Mr. Douglas.

Minister of Justice for Thailand, General Paiboon Koomchaya, opened the conference focusing on Thailand's efforts to work with Mekong neighbours to reduce the trafficking of methamphetamine and heroin, including strong comments on the need to reduce the trafficking of precursor chemicals. "Illicit drugs can not be made without precursor

chemicals and we need to work with the countries producing chemicals to stop diversion and trafficking”.

The Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) Asia – Pacific is a subsidiary body of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which is the central policymaking body within the United Nations system dealing with drug-related matters. UNODC holds HONLEA meetings annually and in three different regions: Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific.

Membership of HONLEA for East Asia and the Pacific is open to any State or territory that is a member or associate member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Other United Nations Members States may be invited as observers at their request.

For further information and interview requests, please contact:

Mr. Chandu Bhandari  
Regional Programme Adviser  
UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific  
[chandu.bhandari@unodc.org](mailto:chandu.bhandari@unodc.org)  
T: (+66) 2 288 2080 | M: (+66) 96 602 8361  
[unodc.org/southeastasiaandpacific](http://unodc.org/southeastasiaandpacific)