

The Thailand Institute of Justice becomes the first Southeast Asian member of UN criminal justice research network

Bangkok (Thailand), 29 June 2016 – The Thailand Institute of Justice (TIJ) has been designated as an official United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network Institute (PNI) today. TIJ’s achievement in becoming the first member of the PNI network from Southeast Asia was announced at an event in the United Nations National Conference Centre in Bangkok hosted by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and presided over by HRH Princess Bajrakittiyabha Mahidol. The event was also attended by senior Thai government officials, ambassadors and diplomatic representatives, as well as UN and NGO partners.

The United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network is managed by UNODC and is comprised of a number of interregional and regional research institutes around the world. The network has been developed to assist key regions to strengthen co-operation in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, and provide a variety of services, including the development of research, exchange of information, training and public education.

“The TIJ has become the 18th member of the network following significant outreach and effort after the TIJ’s inception a couple of years ago,” said Mr. Jeremy Douglas, UNODC Regional Representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific. “It also recognizes how quickly the TIJ has been able to establish itself as a regional leader in policy analysis and research – something that has been Her Royal Highness’ vision for the Institute.”

Rapid regional integration over recent years has led to growth and development within the Southeast Asian region, but has at the same time challenged established governance and justice systems. As the region evolves, law enforcement and justice officials in Southeast Asia are increasingly looking for solutions to tackle national and cross-border crime and strengthen the rule of law. “We are very pleased to join the PNI network and believe that the TIJ is well placed to help Thailand and the region with research and advice,” said Dr. Kittipong Kittiyarak, Executive Director of the TIJ. “Importantly, we will be doing so with an understanding of Southeast Asia that supplements UN efforts.”

The United Nations and the TIJ share a similar vision of promoting the rule of law through essential and integrated development efforts, including through implementing the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, which makes the connection between security and criminal justice processes, is particularly relevant: predictable forms of justice are fundamental to building societies with a rule of law foundation that facilitates growth and development.

“The TIJ, working with the Government of Thailand and UNODC, appreciates many of the challenges to development, including in Southeast Asia,” said Minister of Justice Paiboon Koomchaya. “The Ministry of Justice is ready to support the vision of Her Royal Highness including by taking on initiatives with the TIJ and our partner UNODC.”

UNODC’s Regional Programme for Southeast Asia, launched with the support of HRH Princess Mahidol and the Government of Thailand two and half years ago, addresses the issues of rule of law and justice, working with and assisting Member States in Southeast Asia to strengthen institutions and tackle governance, security and public health challenges. It was developed through extensive research and consultations with Member States and UN partners and is the first integrated regional programme of UNODC.

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