



The 6th Meeting of the AIPA Fact-Finding Committee (AIFOCOM)
to Combat the Drug Menace
10 - 14 May 2009, Le Meridien Chiang Rai Resort
Chiang Rai, Thailand

**Speech By H.E. Mr. Chai Chidchob,
President of the National Assembly of Thailand and
President of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)
At the Opening Ceremony of the 6th Meeting of the ASEAN
Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Fact Finding Committee
(AIFOCOM) to Combat the Drug Menace
On Monday, 11 May 2009, at 08.45 am
at Le Meridien Chiang Rai Resort,
Chiang Rai, Thailand.**

**Heads of AIFOCOM Member Delegations,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

On Behalf of the National Assembly of Thailand, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all delegates and officials to Chiang Rai Province for attending the 6th Meeting of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Fact Finding Committee (AIFOCOM) to Combat the Drug Menace. I am delighted and honored to host this significant event that reflects a continuity of AIPA efforts to address one of the most regional challenges.

As we all know, the drug problem has created tremendous effects on social security and stability of almost every country in the world. Each government in ASEAN member countries is trying to

strengthen their national capacity to cope with illicit drugs. But I believe that more have to be done both at national level and by regional front to respond vigorously and decisively to suppress and eradicate the drug problem.

ASEAN has expressed their strong determination to overcome drug problems by announcing the ASEAN Declaration of Principles to Combat the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs since 1976. Over three decades, many frameworks have been adopted and numbers of strategies have been formulated as a regional approach in drug abuse control and prevention. A danger of drug issue still remains as our colossal and complicated challenge so our determination to combat the drug menace must not fade away but stronger.

As we consider, ASEAN countries have already invested a lot of efforts at the legislative and operational levels to fight against drug menace, greater attention should be paid to enhancing legal cooperation among member countries in combating illicit drug trafficking. The AIFO COM Meeting will enable all Member Delegates to review our legislation with a view to putting in place the legal framework to facilitate mutual legal assistance as provided under the ASEAN Treaty of Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible with a view of harmonization of laws on combating the drug menace among ASEAN member countries.

The 6th Meeting of AIFO COM which focusing on legal harmonization on key areas of the Seizure and Forfeiture of Assets in Drug Criminal Case and the Chemicals and Precursors Control will foster AIPA commitment to strengthen the exchange of information and seek a full cooperation on drugs control.

Honorable Delegates,

The drug control policy has been placed as the top priority of every Government. A sustain alternative development is another platform that many countries and the international community continue their combined efforts to design appropriate and sound

policies and programmes to ensure sustainable alternative livelihoods for their peoples and their communities.

It is my pleasure that, today the AIFO COM Member Delegations will have a good opportunity to join our study visit program to the Doi Tung Development Project of Mae Fah Luang Foundation, a crop replacement in the highland and also up to the Golden Triangle border. I hope you all enjoy and gain a good experience from this trip.

Honorable Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

We all acknowledge a departure from the perception of the drug problem as merely a social and health challenge to one that had implications for national and regional security, stability, prosperity and resilience. We hope to win the drug menace if ASEAN stands united to suppress and exterminate the problem.

I ensure that the 6th Meeting of the AIFO COM will be a fruitful and productive forum of deliberations and enhance the role of AIPA in contributing further towards an achievement of a Drug Free ASEAN in 2015. I wish all of you to have a pleasant stay in this beautiful city of Chiang Rai. It is my pleasure to declare the 6th Meeting of the AIFO COM open.

Thank you



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