



**Fifth Meeting of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)  
Fact-Finding Committee (AIFOCOM) to Combat the Drug Menace  
Singapore, 22-25 June 2008**

**Strategies and Key Milestones in the Drug Free ASEAN 2015 Roadmap**

**I. Introduction**

1. ASEAN's resolve to combat the drug menace can be traced back as early as the ASEAN Experts Group Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse in 1972. A further boost to combat the problem was derived from the Bali Accord 1976 signed by the Heads of Government/State of the founding Members States as well as with the relevant international bodies in the prevention and eradication of the abuse of narcotics and the illegal drugs trafficking.
2. The adoption of the ASEAN Declaration of Principles to Combat the Abuse of Narcotics Drugs in 1976 by ASEAN Foreign Ministers proved to be a major prevention and control. This declaration provided the framework for the adoption of a programme of action in the context of cooperation to combat the abuse of narcotics drugs.
3. An immediate response to the declaration was the convening of the First Meeting of ASEAN Drug Experts in Singapore in the same year, which led to take full responsibility for ASEAN cooperation in combating illicit drugs. ASOD is focusing its cooperation in five major areas: preventive education, treatment and rehabilitation, law enforcement, research, and alternative development. It also formulates strategies to enhance mutual cooperation for the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration of Principles.
4. In more recent times, ASEAN has reiterated the urgent need to act against this ever-increasing menace. ASEAN Leaders, at their 2<sup>nd</sup> Informal Summit in 1997 adopted the ASEAN Vision 2020 – a document setting out a broad vision for ASEAN in the year 2020. Among the goals forecast is the creation of a drug-free Southeast Asia and a region of agreed rules of behaviour and cooperative measures to deal with problems that can only be met on a regional scale.
5. ASEAN Foreign Ministers also signed the joint Declaration for a Drug-Free ASEAN affirming the association's commitment to eradicate the production, processing, trafficking and use of illicit drugs in Southeast Asia by the year 2020. At the 6<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in 1998, the ASEAN Leaders reiterated their calls for strengthening and promoting regional linkages among ASEAN institutional mechanisms, including those involved in fighting drug abuse and trafficking.
6. The 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Ministerial meeting (AMM) held in 1998 adopted a Joint Declaration for a Drug-Free ASEAN 2020, as an attempt to further implement ASEAN Leaders' Vision of a Drug-Free ASEAN by 2015.

**II. Updated drugs situation in ASEAN region from 2005 to 2008**

7. ASEAN Member States have both politically and operationally committed to the overall achievement of a Drug – Free ASEAN 2015 and in improving the security and

stability of the region by dealing effectively with the threat of illicit drugs. The level of policy-level attention that the issue of drugs has received is a testament to focus the political leaders of the region place to mobilize government efforts to deal with this joint concern.

8. At the operational and programmatic levels there is a heightened sense of need to work together and meet the goals and targets that the region has set for Supply and in Demand Reduction. In terms of transnational cooperation, the region has moved forward in significant ways to respond to international crime syndicates with a joint and coherent response. This is evident in the Border Liaison Office (BLO) mechanism.

9. In light of the changing nature of the drug problem there are particular areas of cooperation and intra-regional support that must be reviewed. For example: the arrangements that allow for the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLA) framework established by ASEAN to work optimally are complicated by national legislation. Several countries in the region have signed bilateral agreements that have shown good results – the challenge is to find operational solutions for a wider implementation of MLA.

10. In terms of identifying the progress made so far the region is far better equipped to gather information and create intelligent assessments. The establishment of data collection networks at the national level and the consolidation of a regional data collection regime have produced significant results in terms of the understanding of the size and scope of the drug problem.

11. However, while opium cultivation has been reduced significantly there remains a threat that this problem could re-emerge if enforcement is not maintained and the livelihoods of farmers are not consolidated via licit means. The re-emergence of Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) as the drug of choice for both traffickers and new users is now fully entrenched in countries that where previously transit points but do not have laboratories operating within their borders.

## **II.a Development of Drug-Free ASEAN 2015**

12. Despite the continued and growing challenges posed by drugs, we must recognize that ASEAN is far better prepared to respond to these threats than in 2000. There is now a clear understanding of the need to address the issue of drugs in a comprehensive way with an equal emphasis on supply reduction and its related enforcement approaches and on demand reduction and its health and education approaches. Government officials in the region from both police and public security are now sharing information with officials from Ministries of Health and Education. The fact that drug dependence is a treatable disease as recognised by all drug control agencies as evident in their strong interest for effective treatment modalities. Law enforcement is well trained and better equipped with skills to manage investigations and communicate with their counterparts in other countries.

13. According to the comprehensive study on the feasibility of achieving a Drug-Free ASEAN by 2015 which was jointly conducted by the ASEAN Secretariat and UNODC indicated that the opium-producing region in Southeast Asia (known as the Golden Triangle, comprising Northeastern Myanmar, Northern Thailand, Northern Lao PDR, Northwestern Viet Nam, and China's Yunnan Province) has seen a sharp reduction in

opium poppy cultivation and opium production over the past five years. In China and Thailand, production of opium has almost been eliminated; existing areas under poppy cultivation in Viet Nam are minimal and the country is no longer considered an opium producer.

14. Lao PDR has made great progress in eradicating opium cultivation. Since 2000, poppy cultivation and production have declined over 90 percent, the number of households cultivating opium has declined by 84 percent, with the number of abusers in the country declining by 60 percent. The rapid decline of opium cultivation and production has been the result of increased eradication measures, as well as adverse climatic conditions during the 2003-2004 planting season. According to the recently completed 2005 Lao Opium Survey, poppy cultivation declined by 73 percent to 1800 hectares from 2004 to 2005. The Lao Government is planning to declare that the country has achieved its objective to be opium-free by the end of the year 2005.

15. In Myanmar, supply reduction efforts in the last few years have resulted in a considerable decrease in the number of hectares under cultivation and a steady decline in potential production. According to the 2004 Myanmar Opium Survey, the number of hectares cultivated was 44,200, a decrease of 29 percent compared to the previous year. Likewise, production levels decreased 54%, the largest percentage drop in the past several years. The reduction in opium cultivation in Myanmar is in line with the national Action Plan to eradicate opium cultivation by the year 2014.

16. Seizures of ATS peaked in 2000, and are now seized in only moderately greater quantities than heroin and opium, despite the dramatic reduction in poppy cultivation. The number of arrests associated with ATS has peaked in several countries, while in Lao PDR and Cambodia the number of ATS arrests continue to rise. More effective patrolling of known trafficking routes has forced criminal syndicates to diversify trafficking routes and techniques, leading to increased availability of ATS in new markets. New trafficking techniques, increasing numbers of methamphetamine abusers, and stronger law enforcement efforts are reflected in the increasing number of arrestees in possession of relatively small amounts of drugs.

17. Shifting patterns of ATS manufacturing has been observed in the region, possibly in response to the strong crackdown in manufacturing in the southern provinces of China, in particular Guangdong and Fujian. Since the late 1990s, many of ASEAN Member States have faced increasing trends in the manufacture of synthetic drugs on their soils, especially the manufacture of crystallized methamphetamine and ecstasy. It appears that international crime syndicates are driving much of the shift of manufacturing activity into the region.

18. However, in order to achieve the commitment of a *Drug – Free ASEAN 2015*, more needs to be done to intensify both supply reduction and demand reduction. For example:

- a. Establishing region-wide key capacities curriculum for law enforcement;
- b. Setting up collaborative initiatives with the customs authorities to integrate cargo-control modalities into free trade agreements and transport facilitation agreements;
- c. Assessing high-risk groups for drug use in all relevant locations and initiate focused campaigns;

- d. Scaling up treatment coverage and widen the community-based programmes for drug dependence in order to capture as many individuals as possible;
- e. Adopting science-based approaches for addressing the nexus between injective drug users (IDU) and HIV/AIDS;
- f. Seek the active participation of the private sector in order to ensure that alternative development products are marketable; and
- g. Expanding and strengthening Border Liaison Offices (BLO) as the premier method to enhance regional cooperation.

### **III. Updated ASOD Activities**

#### **III.a ASOD**

19. ASOD is well aware of the need to maintain a regional approach to addressing the drug problem. National actions are important but the multilateral approach to the cross border aspects of the problem, primarily data collection and analysis, cross-border cooperation, capacity building and training and regional frameworks for the control of precursors are best targeted through regional and multilateral mechanisms. The enormity of the problem and the interconnectedness of the direct and indirect causes and effects of drug abuse, trafficking and production must be addressed in ways to drastically reduce the drug challenges in the region.

20. The 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) was convened on 1-2 September 2006 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The Meeting was chaired by the Secretary-General of the Narcotics Control Board of Thailand and was attended by Senior Officials on Drugs Matters from the ASEAN Member States.

21. At the Meeting, Member States acknowledged that one of the key challenges facing ASEAN is the rapid emergence of new drugs such as Ketamine, the Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) especially methamphetamine and ecstasy, as well as the new modes of trafficking. In addressing these challenges closer bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation is critical due to the transnational nature of the issues concerned.

22. On cooperation with dialogue partners, the Meeting agreed that cooperation with China on regional efforts to combat drug trafficking needs to be further strengthened. In view of this, the Meeting agreed that ASOD initiatives should be closely aligned with the ACCORD comprehensive Plan of Action.

23. The Meeting agreed that there is an urgent need to streamline the reporting mechanism between SOMTC and ASOD. In this regard the Meeting recommended that the ASOD Working Group on Law Enforcement should be the SOMTC Working Group on Illicit Drug Trafficking.

24. The Meeting agreed to develop an ASOD Work Plan that will incorporate the Work Plans to be developed by the Working Groups as well as the ACCORD Plan of Action and the SOMTC Work Programme on Illicit Drug Trafficking. ASEC will compile the draft ASOD Work Plan for consideration and endorsement of the forthcoming 29th ASOD.

25. The 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASOD was held in Ha Noi on 20-23 August 2007 and attended by senior officials responsible for drugs matters from all ASEAN Member States. The Meeting agreed that despite the significant success in reducing production of opium poppy and controlling natural drugs, the drug situation in ASEAN remains grave due to increasing challenges of synthetic drugs.

26. The Meeting emphasised the need for an agreed definition of “Drug-free” and the establishment of a regional database by which ASEAN Member States’ efforts in achieving a Drug-Free ASEAN by 2015 can be measured. (Note: The issues were discussed at ASOD Workshop held on 29 – 30 October 2007 at the ASEAN Secretariat and the Report of Status and Recommendation for Drug Free ASEAN 2015 was submitted for the consideration of the 6<sup>th</sup> AMMTC).

27. The Meeting endorsed Viet Nam's proposal that a workshop be convened to develop an ASEAN Work Plan in Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking (ASOD Work Plan) so that it could serve as clear guidelines for the Member States in enhancing cooperation on drugs control, in particular attaining the goals of a Drug-Free ASEAN by 2015. (Note: In line with the decision of the 6<sup>th</sup> AMMTC, the Workshop was planned for April 2008 in Danang, Viet Nam).

28. The Meeting emphasised the need for an enhanced coordination between ASOD and relevant ASEAN bodies involved in drugs control so as to avoid programmes duplication. The Meeting agreed that a reporting line mechanism should be further discussed at the above-mentioned workshop.

29. The Meeting also agreed that it needs to provide inputs to the drafting of ASEAN Charter. In this regard, two possible channels were considered and agreed: (i) presenting through their respective country representatives of HLTF; or (ii) each ASOD Focal Point submitting their inputs to the current Chairperson of 28<sup>th</sup> ASOD, for transmission to the HLTF, who will then consult ASEAN bodies in the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> SOC-COM. (Note: ASOD Chair has submitted its recommendation to the HLTF in November 2007).

### **III.b ACCORD Mechanism**

30. Recognizing that China plays an important role in combating illicit drugs, ASEAN together with China have established the ASEAN-China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD). The ACCORD Plan of Action was initially developed to reduce the production of natural drugs such as opium and cannabis, especially in the Golden Triangle area. While the objective has been relatively achieved through drastic reduction of natural drugs production, the region is now facing increasing prevalence of production and trafficking of synthetic drugs such as amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) and ecstasy. In response to this grave development, the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACCORD Congress held in Beijing in September 2005 decided to revise the Plan of Action to adequately address the new challenges.

31. Both the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) Work Plan and ACCORD Plan of Action contain priority pillars, i.e. preventive education/civic awareness, treatment and rehabilitation, law enforcement cooperation, research (ASOD), and alternative development programme. The latter was developed to reduce illicit crop production in the region, which yielded significant result as evidenced in Lao

PDR's success in achieving opium production-free in December 2005. The opium production in Myanmar was also notably reduced. These reports were confirmed by UNODC and the US' Drugs Enforcement Agency (DEA) reports.

32. ACCORD has established a Working Group on Regional Joint Actions Against ATS-Related Crime which meets annually back-to-back with the ACCORD Task Force III Meeting on Law Enforcement Cooperation. The Working Group is a closed-door forum aimed at sharing information on activities and data of drug syndicates in the region and to follow-up on joint operations in combating illicit drugs in Southeast Asia and China.

33. The 3<sup>rd</sup> ACCORD Joint Task Force Meeting was held on 3 August 2006 in Chiang Mai, back-to-back with the 27<sup>th</sup> ASOD. The Meeting reviewed ACCORD activities, the ACCORD Control Mechanism (UNODC's project F73), status of ACCORD Account and reports of the four ACCORD projects implemented under ACCORD Account funding. On future direction of the ACCORD, the Meeting agreed that ACCORD should be self-reliant even after the end of the UNODC's F73 project and urged ACCORD Participating Countries to contribute to the ACCORD Account.

34. The Meeting also reviewed UNODC's list of areas of cooperation and agreed to work on areas of precursor control mechanism and compulsory drug treatment and rehabilitation. The Meeting also recommended that, for funding support of future projects, ASEC should assist in seeking funding from ASEAN-China Cooperation Fund for ACCORD projects and other trust funds for ASOD projects.

35. The 4<sup>th</sup> ACCORD Joint Task Force Meeting was held on 23 August 2007 in Ha Noi, back –to-back with the 28<sup>th</sup> ASOD Meeting. The Meeting agreed that should UNODC be unable to raise funds to secure continuation of the DAINAP and projects, ACCORD project would continue with Member States' financial contribution and ASEC running the ACCORD Joint Secretariat which is now held jointly. In this regard, the Meeting noted Thailand's USD 30,000 contribution to ACCORD account and Brunei's pledge for contribution. ASEC was asked to send an immediate reminder on this contribution to Member States.

### **III.c Cooperation with the Plus Three Countries (China, Japan and Republic of Korea)**

36. In an effort to strengthen extra-regional cooperation in combating illicit drugs, ASEAN also forged its cooperation with the Plus Three countries namely China, Japan and Republic of Korea. In this regard, SOMTC established its Working Group on Narcotics which is one and the same ASOD Working Group. The SOMTC + 3 Working Group on Narcotics convenes its annual meetings back-to-back with the annual ASOD Meeting.

37. The 2<sup>nd</sup> SOMTC Working Group on Narcotics was held on 3 August 2006 in Chiang Mai. The Meeting reviewed the proposed areas of cooperation under the Drug Component of the ASEAN Plus Three Work Plan for Cooperation in Combating Transnational Crime and agreed that China, Japan and ROK will submit their comments and inputs to ASEC through their respective SOMTC Focal Points.

38. The Meeting endorsed the ROK's proposal for a 3-year cooperation activity with ASEAN on sharing expertise and use of ICT in combating illicit drugs. This project is a

revised version of the one submitted by ROK at the 6<sup>th</sup> SOMTC Meeting in Bali in June 2006. The proposed activity will have an initial funding of USD 1 Million and will begin with a pilot stage in Lao PDR in the first year (2007). This will be followed by a seminar in Seoul to be attended by all Member States to share the outcomes of the Lao PDR pilot project and look at the possible extension of the activities to Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam. The project was subsequently received ad-referendum endorsement by SOMTC and ASC accordingly.

39. The 3<sup>rd</sup> SOMTC + 3 Working Group was held on 23 August 2007 in Ha Noi. The Meeting noted ASEC's information that, as agreed at the 5<sup>th</sup> SOMTC + 3 Consultation, a study on effective implementation of ASEAN Plus Three Work Plan to Combat Transnational Crime, including its component on illicit drug trafficking. The Meeting also reviewed the progress of the implementation of the first stage of the ASEAN-ROK Knowledge Transfer on Narcotics Crime implemented in Lao PDR in 2007.

#### **IV. Activities in Combating Illicit Drugs (2006 – 2007)**

40. On 10 – 14 July 2006 in Jakarta, 40 police officers from drug control agencies of the ASEAN Member States and China attended Training for Under-cover Operation funded by the ACCORD Fund and conducted by the National Narcotics Board (NNB) of Indonesia. The Training was focused on the under-cover operation to combat illicit drugs trafficking in the region.

41. As approved by the 2<sup>nd</sup> SOTMC + 3 Working Group on Narcotics in August 2006 (refer to paragraph 38), an ASEAN – ROK project on Knowledge Transfer on Narcotics Crime Transfer implemented by the Supreme Prosecutors' Office (SPO) of the Republic Korea for a period of 3 years commencing from January 2007. The first phase of the project has been successfully implemented in Lao PDR and the outcomes and lessons learned from the first phase were shared with all ten Member States at the ASEAN-ROK Workshop on Knowledge on Narcotic Crime Transfer held in Seoul on 20 – 22 January 2008. With the successful conclusion of the first phase, the second phase of the project has been kick-started in two other ASEAN Member States, namely, Cambodia and Viet Nam for 2008.

42. A comprehensive study on the feasibility of achieving a Drug-Free ASEAN by 2015 which was jointly conducted by the ASEAN Secretariat and UNODC. Its report was reviewed at the ASEAN Workshop on Evaluating the Report of the Study on Achieving Drug Free ASEAN 2015: Status and Recommendation, convened on 29 - 30 October 2007 in Jakarta. The outcome of the Workshop, Report on Vision, Benchmarks and Recommendations Towards Achieving Drug-Free ASEAN 2015 was later presented to the 6<sup>th</sup> AMMTC.

43. At the 6<sup>th</sup> AMMTC, which was held on 8 November 2007 in Brunei Darussalam, the Ministers tasked ASOD to determine specific targets and timeline to its Work Plan and report on progress of its implementation to the next AMMTC; and agreed that in achieving a Drug Free ASEAN 2015 within the broader ASEAN Community, cross sectoral linkages among existing regional and extra-regional mechanisms need to be further strengthened and coordinated.

44. On 28 November – 7 December 2008, a Basic Training Course on Investigation in Anti-Drug Money Laundering for ASEAN Law Enforcement Officials: phase II was

conducted in Singapore. The training was sponsored by Japan and conducted by CNB Singapore for over 30 police officers from all ASEAN Member States.

45. On 24 – 30 March 2008, a training workshop for Youth Leaders on Social Development and Drug Abuse Prevention was conducted in Chiang Rai and Bangkok for 50 Youth Leaders from ASEAN Member States and China on drug abuse prevention measures and strategies. The training was funded by the ACCORD Fund and implemented by ONCB of Thailand.

46. A training workshop on Centre-based Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Model for drug control officials from 11 ACCORD Member States was conducted in Ho Chi Ming City on 9 – 10 April 2008. The training was conducted by SODC of Viet Nam under funding support from ACCORD Fund.