



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

## COUNTRY REPORT OF VIETNAM

### Section I: Drugs crime and drug abuse situation In Vietnam 2007

#### I. Overview on drugs situation

In 2007, the world continued facing the global challenges, such as environment degradation, natural disaster, diseases, etc. The economy of many countries was in difficulty due to the dramatically increase of price of strategic commodities and negative impact of the globalization process and integration. The above-mentioned factors significantly affected socio-economic development, political security, social order, drug control matters included.

##### 1. Drug crime problems:

Fully aware of the difficulties and favorable factors in the political-security and socio-security strategies, last year, the government, National Committee on AIDS < Drugs, Prostitution Control of Vietnam actively took their initiative of launching comprehensive measures to successfully implement the National Drug Control Master Plan period 2006-2010. As a result, drug crime and drug abuse situation in Vietnam in the past years have been continued to be under control. The number of drug cases and drug offenders continued decreasing in comparison with the same period of the year before. Drug criminal violations were less obvious and publicly than those in the previous time. However, in the national scale, drug crime and drug abuse situation continued taking place complicated, implicitly and unpredictably. The most complicated areas were border –line of the North-West, Northern part of Central provinces and South-West provinces, particularly.

*In the North-West area:* On the Vietnam-Lao border line, the drug control agencies of Vietnam still detected a number of drug trafficking syndicates that committed trafficking drugs from the “Golden Triangle” into Vietnam. The common drugs trafficked were opium, heroin and ATS. The number of ATS trafficking and the amount of ATS in single case tended to be remarkably increasing. Right at the border-line, a number of trans-national drug trafficking syndicates closely incorporated with the local drug traffickers to store a significant amount of drugs so that then trafficked into Vietnam whenever they find suitable time. A part from that, the situation relating to drug abuse and poppy cultivation in those areas were more complicated than other areas.

*On the Vietnam-China border line:* Two discrepant drug trafficking trends at the same time existed. The number and the amount of psychotropic substances trafficked from outside into Vietnam continued decreasing compared with the year. Meanwhile, opium and heroin trafficking cases from Vietnam to China tended increasing. Almost all

National border gates, open-economic zones, trading areas on the Vietnam China border line found drug trafficking cases. Among them, some National border gates such as Mong Cai, Tan Thanh, HuuNghi and Lao Cai very often found drug trafficking with great amount of drugs.

*Vietnam-Cambodia border line:* The major types of drugs trafficked into Vietnam were ATS, in which there was even ice form of Methamphetamine. Some certain amount of the trafficked illicit drugs were used to meet the demands of drug abusers at the social evil pots, casinos at Moc Bai, Ta Keo Border Gates and the others further went to Ho Chi Minh City and some provinces of the South-West part of Vietnam. Along with that, on this route, the fact has showed that trafficking precursors have been increasing for the past years. Among some detected cases, there were some cases with more than 10 tons of precursors.

*Costal and Island areas:* The drug control agencies of Vietnam have found some drug trafficking routes to exercise drug trafficking from the Northern provinces to the Central Costal provinces and Southern ports. It was noted that, there were some evidences of using Central Costal Port as a transit point to traffic drugs to the third countries.

*Inland:* Cannabis production and trafficking emerged as an unusual phenomenon in the last year. Some persons did cultivate by themselves or hired farmers to cultivate in some northern provinces for exporting cannabis seeds to the other countries. Also ATS abuse in the night clubs, discotheque in the big cities continued taking place complicated.

The modus operandi used for drug trafficking were more and more spontaneous, sophisticated and artful. In some cases, drug criminals used internet as a communication means to conduct drug crime activities. They also used trans-national trucks as a common means to traffic drugs into Vietnam by the land-road. They also used advanced telecommunication technique to operate members of the drug syndicates. Drug traffickers were well equipped with fire-arm weapons and decisively opposed drug law enforcement. Together with land road, sea routs, postal services were also used by drug traffickers to commit drug criminal activities.

## **2. Drug abuse situation:**

According to the statistic figure, by the end of 2007, in Vietnam, it was registered 178,305 drug abusers, increased 18,079 persons (accounts for 11,28%) compared with the year before (160.226 persons).

*Component of the drug abusers:* Drug abusers who are unemployed accounts for 53.82%. Male drug abusers account for 95.67%; Female drug abusers just account (4.33%). Drug abusers who are affected by HIV are 25,792 persons, accounting for 14,46% total of drug abusers.

*Drug abusers by the types of drugs:* Heroin is the first choice, accounts for 88.13%; opium accounts for 10.21%; cannabis 0.79%; ATS 0.35%. The admission ways: injecting 63.52%; smoking is 22.65%; sniffing is 13.52%.

## **II. Measures and drug control results:**

### **1. *Building up and implementing drug control strategy and policy***

In the past year, the drug control agencies of Vietnam continued to implement the Drug Control Master Plan up to 2010 by focusing on building up projects of the National Drug Control Target Program ratified by the Prime Minister of Vietnam and compiled a National Drug Control Strategy period 2010-2015 with the view to 2020.

The drug control of Vietnam continued to perfect the drug control legal system by revising the Drug Law and present it to the National Assembly for approval (May 2008). In the Amended Drug Law, there are some adjustments relating to the specialized drug prevention and suppression agencies, drug treatment and rehabilitation, harm reduction issues; to prepare for amendment of the Penal Code.

### **2. *Anti-Drug propaganda and drug prevention campaigns***

In the past year, a variety of anti drug propaganda and drug prevention programs were launched with the wide participation from political social organizations. For example, the Anti-Drug Mobilization Campaign launched in Son La; Forum on Drug Control matters held by the National Fatherland Front, Discussion on who to help ex-drug abusers to prevent relapse and reinterpretation; live show and direct talk with the TV audience on the drug treatment topic; Some favorite programs were Panorama on drug control issued; The new aspect of the drug prevention activities in 2007 was, the Youth Association extended their anti drug propaganda programs to the industrial zone and processing zone therefore there was very strong affect to the young workers and other group outside of the school.

The central mass media and local mass media also actively participated in drug control activities by spending significant amount of time to broadcast and promote drug control activities. Apart from broadcasting information relating to drug trafficking cases, there was wide range of drug control topics such as good practice in drug treatment, poppy alternative development, etc. Also last year, many valuable anti drug propaganda materials such as booklist, leaflet were issued. Anti drug campaigns created strong movement right from the community and attracted the concern from different social class.

In many localities, anti drug propaganda campaigns have been synchronously launched such as: holding socio-cultural, sport event with anti drug topics, setting up mobile anti-drug propaganda groups, outreach groups, etc. The HIV/AIDS, Drug, Prostitution Steering Committee of provinces and cities launched campaign with title "To build up agency, organization, school, community without drug" and integrate those campaigns with other campaigns in the community.

The Committee of the Fatherland Front of provinces and cities incorporated with the local authorities to mobilize people to participate in the "building up new cultural living style in the community" that created significant change in the localities.

### **3. *Drug crime prevention and suppression***

The specialized drug prevention and suppression agencies regularly launched high peak drug suppression seasons together with doing other professional preventive measures as well as strengthening drug crime investigation activities in the main route, hot points, border lines, particularly to focus their effort on interdiction drug trafficking from outside; intensifying drug crime investigation and eradicating drug crime complicated hot pots, particularly activities that abuse night club services to commit drug crime activities in general, ATS abuse in particular.

In 2007, in total more than 10,000 drug cases and nearly 15,000 drug offenders were detected and arrested (reduced by 982 cases/1,980 drug offenders). Among them, the drug crime investigation forces of police investigated 9,191 cases/13,568 drug offenders; 160 kg of heroin; 63 kg of opium; 29,679 tablets and 666 gram ATS; 11,000 tablets, ampoules and 4.5 kg of psychotropic substances; more than 8 tons of cannabis; 7,500 kg of precursors (sassafras oil), 5,750 gram of ephedrine, 660 gram addicted grass were seized and confiscated property worth dozen billion VND as well as many other related weapons, transportation means.

#### **4. Drug treatment, rehabilitation and after care management**

Currently, three major drug treatment modalities are widely implemented in Vietnam, they are:

Centralized drug treatment modality that applied to the drug users who have long term history of drug abuse and relapse as well as drug users who lack support from their family members. This modality so far has attracted a great number of drug users in the cities and provinces with high density of drug users such as Hanoi, Haiphong, Ho Chi Minh City, etc. With 83 drug treatment centers, Vietnam is capable to admit and provide services to nearly 60,000 drug users. The duration for drug treatment course is from 1 to 2 years. After attending the 2 year-treatment course in the center, drug users of the Ho Chi Minh City are arranged to work for 3 more years in the enterprise of production centers.

Family-community based treatment modality: This modality has been applied to the new drug users, or someone who are supported and concerned by their family. After being detoxified, drug users were assigned to their family for continuous management, follow up within 6 months. This treatment modality has been considered to be effective for drug users who are newly addicted or someone who has not exercised injecting. Particularly, this modality is suitable for drug users who are from ethnic minorities because it can help them to avoid inferiority complex.

The three-phase Treatment Modality that consists of the Detoxification phase in the community, working treatment in the construction site, and after-care management in the community has been commonly applied for the localities where there is low density of drug users of somewhere there is convenient for setting up construction site.

Because of the mutual efforts of concerned ministries, sections and local authorities, drug treatment and rehabilitation in Vietnam has created significant changes. In 2007, by diversifying and socializing drug treatment modalities, 63,000 drug users were provided with drug treatment services. A dozen of drug users have been arranged jobs or attended after-care activities.

The difficulty of the drug treatment of Vietnam is the relapse rate has been still high. Due to the shortage of financial investment, some Drug Treatment Center have not met the practical demand. Some Drug Treatment Center haven't got isolation wards for infections patients. Also they haven't got the really effective medicines for drug treatment process.

### **5. *Poppy eradication and alternative development***

In the first months of the 2007, there were emerging phenomenon of cannabis cultivation in large scale in some Northern and Southern provinces. The drug law enforcement of Vietnam detected and investigated drug crime syndicates that illegally hired farmers to cultivate cannabis in Hatay, Hoabinh provinces, seized and destroyed more than 30 tons of raw cannabis, 100 kg of cannabis seeds, 7000m<sup>2</sup> of cannabis and many other related materials. To dress this problem, the Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam closely cooperated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ethnic Committee, Ministry of Defense and other relevant ministries instructing local authorities to check, monitor, destroy cannabis and strictly treat offenders; the Police force and Border Army actively promoted and teach local people how to recognize cannabis plant and cooperate with local authority in detecting, destroying cannabis as well as preventing any violation relating to cannabis cultivation.

However, the cultivation of plants that consist of addictive substances still took place. In the period 2006-2007 it was detected and destroyed 37.9 ha of poppy plant (decreased by 146.968 ha, equal to 80% of the period 2005-2006). Poppy cultivation mainly took place in the isolated, remote areas or some location on the border line.

### **6. *Drug control activities at school***

To cope with drug situation and its impact on youth and school children, the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam together with the other relevant ministries, socio-political organizations has intensified drug prevention measures and continued effectively implemented the Inter-Ministerial drug control action plan between Ministry of Education, Training and Ministry of Public Security; Regularly conducted inspection, monitoring drug situation in "hot places"; provided school teachers with anti drug knowledge, skills; together with the Youth Organization held activities such as competitions to help school children to learn about Drug Law, encourage students sign commitment for not using drugs; integrated drug control matter in the teaching curriculum and so on.

### **Conclusion**

To bring into play the result of the first year of the implementation of Drug Control Master Plan; with the high concentration of instruction and response from the central level to the grassroots level, drug control activities in Vietnam in 2007 achieved significant results and continued to create remarkable changes of awareness among social class. Drug control policy mobilized the whole political system, the whole society participate in the drug control activities. Therefore, in the national scale, drug crime and drug abuse problems were still under control. Those achievements played important role in managing social order and political security and assisting socio-economic development.

However, due to the direct impact of complicated drug problem in the region, drug trafficking has not been totally interdicted from outside. Drug criminal activities and drug abuse inland has been complicated; the danger of ATS trafficking and abuse has been increased. Drug treatment and rehabilitation for the drug users has been still facing big challenge. The number of drug users last year increased by 11.28%.

## **Section II: International Cooperation**

In 2007, the drug control agencies of Vietnam successfully implemented 2 United Nation Drug Control Treaties, and other multilateral, bilateral drug control agreements, treaties signed between Vietnam and other governments, international bodies; Vietnam attended the 50 COD meeting of the UN; A delegation with high-ranking drug control officers visited and worked with the Russian Federation Drug Control Committee; Vietnam also successfully hosted the 28<sup>th</sup> ASOD meeting; ACCORD meeting; ASEAN + 3 meeting (China, Japan, South Korea); Drug control Agencies of Vietnam also received many international guests who visited Vietnam and exchanged drug control experience etc.

Cooperation between drug control agencies of Vietnam and neighboring countries has been intensified; meetings to exchange between the drug control agencies of the provinces that share the border with that of the neighboring countries were held on regular basis. The drug control agencies of Vietnam also assisted Lao and Cambodia to build up capacity and exchange knowledge and experience in drafting drug.

In the context of the fact that drug trans-national syndicates abuse our region as a transit point to traffic drug into other regions or abusing the economic integration illegally to conduct drug manufacture and trafficking, the exchange of drug crime information between the drug control agencies of the countries in the region to interdict drug trafficking intention and other drug violation in the East-West corridor is urgent requirement.