

South East Asia Regional Training on Treatment and Rehabilitation

Bangkok, Thailand, 18-29 April 2011

Opening Speech

By

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Secretary-General

The Colombo Plan Secretariat

Dear Mr. Pithaya Jinawat, Senior Narcotics Control Advisor

Distinguished Guests

Trainers and friends of the Colombo Plan

It is indeed my honor and privilege to be here with you all on this occasion, opening ceremony of the South East Asia Regional Training on Treatment and Rehabilitation for treatment professionals.

2. First of all, I wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), Thailand for providing us with all the support to organize and make this training possible and the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), US Department of State for its financial assistance.

3. Drug addiction is a treatable disease and providers of treatment and rehabilitation services need to understand the addiction and treatment modalities. Abuse of drugs can cause many psychiatric disorders such as depression, bi-polar disorder and delusion disorder. Individuals with these disorders undergo frequent mood swings which affect their day to day relations with other people. The treatment practitioners need to learn the skills of helping the drug dependents who suffer from such disorders by providing a comprehensive treatment approach.

4. There has been a rapid increase in drug abuse all over the world with more than 250 million drug abusers. Of this, 38 million are drug dependents, but only about 4.9 million, or only 13%, receive treatment. Since drug dependence is a complex and multifunctional disorder involving individual cultural, biological, social, and environmental factors, recovery from this medical-psychological and familial disorder requires help from a professional therapeutic team. It is difficult for drug dependents to give up drugs on their own. Drug dependents need to undergo

continuous and holistic treatment to help them stay clean. At the same time, the availability of drugs should also be reduced. Hence, both supply and demand reduction should be targeted simultaneously. A comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach including law enforcement, prevention methods, treatment and rehabilitation of drug dependents should be our strategic approach.

5. This training is specially designed to provide participants with the basic components of drug treatment and rehabilitation such as pharmacology of drugs, principles of treatment, an understanding of addiction and the brain, continuum of care and counseling. This is also the first training for the treatment professionals based on the treatment manual developed by the Colombo Plan in Collaboration with the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), US Department of State. We hope to develop a treatment model that would be tailored to the needs of the Asia- Pacific region. I also wish to inform you that the Colombo firmly believes in whole person recovery and not in harm reduction or substitution methods. A field trip will also be arranged to the Pramongkut Hospital to understand the modality of this treatment centre.

6. The year 2011 is a special and memorable year for the Colombo Plan as it proudly celebrates the 60th year of dedicated services to the people of its member countries, in particular, and the world at large.

7. The Colombo Plan for cooperative economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific is the oldest inter-governmental organization in the region, dating as far back as 1951. Over years the Colombo Plan has contributed immensely to the development of human resources and capacity building of professionals from the member countries through its four programmes namely Public Administration and Environment, Private Sector Development and Long –Term Scholarship at Master Degree Level and the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (CPDAP). And I take pride to inform that the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (CPDAP) is the first and the oldest regional programme to address the drug abuse problem in the Asia – Pacific. Responding to the changing needs of the member countries, the CPDAP has embarked on several innovative strategies in the recent past, such as the faith-based approach in drug demand reduction programmes, mobilizing of youth to prevent drug abuse through Youth to Youth drug prevention strategies, precursor training and training for law enforcement officers.

8. The Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (CPDAP) has many past collaborations with the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB), Thailand in the implementation of various training programmes, egs on Precursor control, drug abuse prevention and treatment and rehabilitation of drug dependents. I wish to place on record our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Mr.Pithaya Jinawat, Senior

Narcotics Control Advisor, ONCB, Thailand and his staff for their excellent cooperation and support to the Colombo Plan.

9. I now have the honor to declare the South East Asia Regional Training on Treatment and Rehabilitation open. I wish all the participants a fruitful training and pleasant stay in this exciting city, Bangkok.

Thank you