

Speech by Mr. Adam Maniku Secretary-General, the Colombo Plan Secretariat at the
Colombo Plan Secretariat – UNODC Joint Meeting, Istanbul, Turkey
7 December 2011

Asalam Alaikum,

A very good morning,

Mr. Brain Morales, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
(INL), USA

Representative from UNODC, Elizabeth Saewz, delegates from Afghanistan, a special
welcome to delegates from Central Asia, and NGOs from Afghanistan.

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here today at the Colombo Plan– UNODC Joint Meeting. Allow me at the outset to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the US Government for funding this important event, which brings us all together, Afghan Government, UNODC and the Colombo Plan to discuss issues and strategies in drug demand reduction activities in the Asia and the Pacific region. I would also like to thank the Government of Turkey, particularly the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for their support in making this event possible.

2. The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific, is the oldest regional inter-governmental organization in the region. Started in 1951, the Colombo Plan has grown from its original membership of 7 to 26 countries, expanding over Asia and the Pacific, and hopefully it will soon have its membership extended to the Middle East. With the changing times and globalization, the Colombo Plan has been dynamically engaged in meeting the needs and demands of its member countries.

3. Currently, the Colombo Plan is actively engaged in 4 different programme activities. The Public Administration Programme is instrumental for harmonizing public administration which includes Governance, Empowering Women, Poverty Reduction and creating awareness on Climates change and Environment Sustainability among others. The programme for Private Sector Development provides short-term training programmes for the development of the private sector, particularly the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The focus of the PPSD is on capacity building, SMEs development and entrepreneurship development. The Programme's scope covers technology transfer, business management and sharing of best practices, trade liberalization policy.

4. The long term Scholarship Programme (LTSP) was a hallmark of the Colombo Plan during its early years until 1989. The LTSP is only offered for post graduate studies at Master's level. Areas of study cover a wide spectrum of subjects from IT management, Agriculture, Social Sciences, Environmental, Diplomacy and International and Public Policy. Today we offer LTSP-on cost sharing basis with government.

5. We are in the process of widening the scope of these programmes by partnering with private Corporation and non government organization for effective delivery of our services to the deprived citizens of the member countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4.The Drug Advisory Programme (DAP), not only is the first and oldest programme in the region to address the issue of drugs, but has embarked on several innovative strategies including faith-based approach in drug demand reduction, drug treatment and rehabilitation, establishment of outreach and drop-in centers and the introduction of life skills to youth, including a massive drug demand reduction program in Afghanistan that involves funding of 28 Treatment Centres; 26 Mosque-based Centres; Counter Narcotics Publics Information Program and Preventive Drug Education program in schools.

5. Publication of training manuals by the Drug Advisory Programme provides the knowledge and skill based training modules relating to drug demand reduction. These were translated to several languages. In February 2009, the Colombo Plan Secretariat has established the Colombo Plan Centre for Certification and Education of Addiction Professionals for enhancing the knowledge, skills and competence of addiction professionals in the Asia.

6. I hope this joint meeting will help UNODC and Colombo Plan to work together, share skills and expertise to bring down the demand and supply of drugs and to provide effective and comprehensive alternative treatment to the addicted population in the Asia. We understand that every country in Asia is trying to fight this social malice in her own way. But I believe that, it is our duty as leading partners in drug demand reduction initiatives in the region to bring together all these resources of member countries to develop a multi pronged methods to find collective solutions. Due to lack of resources and dearth of trained and experienced treatment professionals, majority of drug addicts never receive proper treatment. At this juncture, I would suggest the Colombo Plan and UNODC experts to put together our skills and knowledge to find innovative and sustainable methods to provide effective and scientific treatment to the drug addicts.

7. I would like to acknowledge the continued support of the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), US Department of State, to the CP DAP without which, it would not be possible for the CP to be a partner in this initiative. By bringing together all interested parties in the Drug Demand Reduction and by working together in partnership, I believe we can successfully tackle the challenges of protecting our communities from the threat of Drug abuse.

8. Thanks to NGOs and advise to engage in skills development as aftercare initiatives. The Colombo Plan can help these initiatives. We believe that to provide employment is one of the effective ways to help recovering addicts to retain in their recovery.

Thank you.