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Contents

CAMBODIA.....	3
1.0 General situation	3
LAOS.....	7
1.0 General Situation	7
2.0 National and regional responses	8
3.0 Update on counter-narcotics programs supported by development partners.....	9
4.0 Identification of needs for external assistance	11
MYANMAR.....	14
1.0 General Situation	14
2.0 Update on Myanmar’s Anti-Drug Strategy	15
3.0 Update on Major Bilateral and Multilateral Counter Narcotics Programmes.....	15
4.0 Prioritised Identification of Needs for External Assistance	20
5.0 Mini-Dublin Group Assessment of Needs	21
VIETNAM.....	24
1.0 General Situation - Drug trafficking	24
2.0 Drugs and health.....	25
3.0 Update on the country’s anti-drugs strategy	25
4.0 Update on major bilateral and multilateral counter-narcotics programs.....	26
5.0 Prioritised identification of needs for external assistance	34
6.0 Mini-Dublin group assessment of needs	34
7.0 Recommendations.....	35

CAMBODIA

1.0 General situation

Transnational organised criminal groups, in particular from Asia, continue to use Cambodia as a transit and destination for methamphetamine and their precursor chemicals as well as other illicit drugs such as heroin. The illicit harvesting and exporting of safrole-rich oils (SRO),¹ which can be used as a precursor for MDMA, has been significantly reduced, but remains a law enforcement and environmental issue. In 2018 cocaine was trafficked mostly from South America via Cambodia to the other destinations, in particular Thailand and Viet Nam. The availability and use of methamphetamine in pill and crystalline form continues to expand. In addition, whereas illicit drug use was previously concentrated primarily in urban areas, in recent years it has been expanding into rural areas, in particular in the provinces adjacent to Lao PDR and Thailand.²

The number of drug users identified by law enforcement authorities in 2018 was 16,216, which was 10 % less than the figure reported in 2017 (18,104). Crystalline methamphetamine were the most common used among drug users but figure is not available.

Among the drug users identified in 2018, by the end of 2018, there were 8,399 drug users discharged from the rehabilitation centres, 8,096 were receiving community-based treatment and 4,746 were detoxified at state and private temporary centres³.

1 Safrole is a substance listed in Table 1 of the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, as well as in Cambodia's Drug Law. The International Narcotics Control Board defines safrole-rich oils as being 'any mixtures or natural products containing safrole present in such a way that it can be used or recovered by readily applicable means'. 'Precursors and chemicals frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances 2008', International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), Vienna, February 2009.

2 Cambodia country report, International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Bureau of International Narcotics Law Enforcement Affairs (BINLEA), U.S. Department of State (Accessed at <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2012/vol1/184098.htm>).

3 NACD, Report on Outcomes of Drug Control in 2018 and Work Direction for 2019.

Table 1: Trend in use of selected drugs in Cambodia, 2012-2018

Drug type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Methamphetamine pills	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
Crystalline methamphetamine	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
“Ecstasy” ⁴	↑	●	●	↓	↑	↑	↑
Cannabis herb	●	●	●	↑	↓	↑	↓
Heroin	●	●	●	↑	↑	↑	↓

↑ = Increase, ↓ = Decrease, ↔ = Stable, ● = Not reported

Source(s): DAINAP; Cambodia country presentation, National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD), NACD presentation at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, Chiang Rai, September 2018; Communication with the NACD September 2014 and March 2015.

The community-based treatment service for drug users in the health system has been expanded to 431 places⁵ by 2018 including – 2 at national hospitals, 24 at provincial hospitals, 73 at referral hospitals and 332 at health centres. Besides, Cambodia has ten temporary centres for drug education and rehabilitation managed by government ministries, the civilian/military police, and NGOs.⁶

In recent years, significant amounts of various illicit drugs have been seized in Cambodia. In 2018, Cambodian national authorities seized 574 kg illicit drugs including methamphetamine, ecstasy, heroin, cocaine, ketamine and marijuana⁷. The number of methamphetamine pills seized in 2018 amounted to 77,000, a significant decrease compared to the amount seized last year. In contrast, the amount of crystalline methamphetamine seized in the country in 2018 reached the record high with 306.6 kg. This steep increase in seizures of methamphetamine in Cambodia is also observed in neighbouring countries of the country. It is mainly due to a shift of large-scale synthetic drug production from China to the Golden Triangle. In addition, Cambodian authorities seized almost 600,000 ecstasy tablets, the largest amount ever reported from the country. The steep increase is due to the drug shipped from Germany to Cambodia.⁸

⁴ Inverted commas used with the word “ecstasy” denote pills sold as ecstasy but which may not contain MDMA and/or any of its analogues but rather other illicit drugs and/or substances not under international control.

⁵ Report of Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Ministry of Health (dated: 28 January 2019)

⁶ Official communication with the Ministry of Health, Cambodia, May 2016.

⁷ NACD, presentation at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, Singapore, September 2019..

⁸ NACD presentation at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, Chiang Rai, September 2018

Within Cambodia there is the challenge of Preng Mrah Prao Phnom, which contains high safrole-rich oils (SROs) - a precursor for ecstasy, although this chemical, and the means of preventing its use, are notably different than others found in the region, as it comes from a plant rather than a laboratory or chemical production facility.⁹

Table 2: Seizures of selected drugs in Cambodia, 2014-2018

Drug type	Measurement	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Methamphetamine pills*	pills	87,000	265,760	441,624	334,400	77,000
Crystalline methamphetamine	kg	29.0	72.9	66.3	80.1	306.6
Ecstasy**	pills	10,533	70.0	49,578	83,544	599,200
Cannabis herb	kg	80.6	1,511.5	36.86	116.3	74
Hashish Oil	kg	0	1.5	0	n/a	
Cocaine	kg	7.9	5.3	14.04	12.8	5.4
Heroin	kg	1.8	2.5	6.27	22.5	1.3
Ketamine	kg	0.52	0.015	1.07	6.25	36.3

● = Not reported/unspecified amount. * The figures include quantities reported as grams; all of which were converted into estimated pill equivalent at 100 mg per pill. ** The figures include quantities reported as grams; all of which were converted into estimated pill equivalent of 300 mg per pill.

Source(s): DAINAP; Cambodia country presentation, National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD), NACD presentation at the Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop, Chiang Rai, September 2018; NACD, Report on Outcomes of Drug Control in 2017 and Work Direction for 2018.

⁹ NACD, presentation at the High-level Conference on Precursor Chemicals, Nay Phi Taw, Myanmar, November 2018.

A limited amount of ketamine is seized in Cambodia each year compared to its neighbouring countries. For the first time, Cambodia has reported seizures of khat, a plant native to the horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula in 2018. Other than ketamine and khat, there has been no seizure of any other new psychoactive substances (NPS). However, considering a number of NPS have been identified in illicit drug markets of neighbouring countries of Cambodia, such as China, Thailand and Viet Nam, Cambodia is not immune from threats posed by other types of NPS.

Seizures of heroin in Cambodia had been relatively small compared to its neighbouring countries, for example only 1.3 kg of the drug were seized in 2018. Some quantities of cocaine have been continuously trafficked to the country, and 2018 seizures of the drug amounted to 5.4 kg. A large portion of the cocaine smuggled into Cambodia is reported to be destined for Thailand and Viet Nam, and is smuggled primarily by West African drug trafficking groups.¹⁰

Cambodia has been continuously targeted by transnational drug trafficking groups. In 2017 there were 268 foreign nationals arrested¹¹. A large proportion of the cases were related to cross-border trafficking between Cambodia and its neighbouring countries such as Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam. Large amounts of methamphetamine (in pill and crystalline form) and heroin manufactured in Myanmar continue to be trafficked into Cambodia through its north-eastern border with Lao PDR.¹² A large portion of the drugs are then often repackaged for further trafficking via overland routes and air passenger couriers to neighbouring countries (primarily Thailand and Viet Nam) and to international markets.¹³

Similar to other neighbouring countries in the Mekong region, the retail price of one methamphetamine pill has been decreasing in recent years. For instance, between 2008 and 2014, the average retail price for price of one methamphetamine pill was USD 5, but since 2015 the price has been less than USD 3 per pill. The significant decrease in the retail price of a methamphetamine pill in the country requires a further study, as the purity levels of methamphetamine pills found in the country have been relatively stable over the same period, it might indicate greater availability of methamphetamine pills in the country. The retail price of crystalline methamphetamine (per gram) in the country in 2018 was reported as USD 15-20, the second lowest in Southeast Asia, after Myanmar (USD 14).¹⁴

¹⁰ Op. cit. NACD, August 2013.

¹¹ NACD, Report on Outcomes of Drug Control in 2017 and Work Direction for 2018.

¹² 'Drug Situation', NACD 2014.

¹³ Op. cit. NACD, February 2014; Op. cit. NACD, August 2014.

¹⁴ DAINAP.

LAOS

1.0 General Situation

Located at the heart of the Mekong sub-region, Laos shares porous land borders with five countries: Myanmar, Thailand, China, Cambodia and Vietnam. Laos' Bokeo Province forms part of the 'Golden Triangle', a well-known drug production and transit area. Laos has increasingly become a transit country for larger volumes of Methamphetamine, ATS, heroin and chemical precursors used in the production of drugs (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: seizure of illicit drugs in Laos 2016-2019

Drug type	2016	2017	2018	2019 Jan-Jun
Heroin (Kg)	221.02	149.55	312.61	112.65
Opium (Kg)	137.72	142.98	111.09	9.61
ATS (Tablet)	2,849,414	10,019,643	15,852,000	13,510,248
Cannabis (Kg)	465.98	4,810.05	445.9	1,043.45
Ice (Kg)	150.06	124.45	1,841.53	2,519.14
Powder Drug (Kg)	1,102.56	189.23	3,016.33	10,010.83

Laos' Northern borders remain the main gateway for drugs into Laos, while borders in the South have increasingly been used for drug outflow. Methamphetamine tablets (ATS) remain the main drug of use in Laos. The use of ATS is expected to have increased due to increased amounts of drugs transiting through the country, but there is no solid data to confirm this in the absence of a comprehensive drug use survey. The number of opium users is assessed as stable.

Laos is significantly impacted by the nature of its borders: often in remote locations, and difficult for police to access. Laos has increasingly been targeted for transit of narcotics by organized crime groups and for traffic of chemicals and base ingredients for narcotics manufacturing through Laos into Myanmar's Shan State. A lack of law enforcement capability support for Laos' MPS and willing partners has restricted the capabilities of the Government despite its commitment and strong efforts to tackle the significant and growing impacts of narcotics trafficking in Laos.

2.0 National and regional responses

2.1 Laos' response

The Lao National Commission on Drug Control and Supervision (LCDC) coordinates Laos' response to drug issues. Several departments within the Ministry of Public Security, the Customs Department in the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Health are also heavily involved in the response to the different threats posed by drug trafficking, production and consumption in Laos.

Aligned with Laos' 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020), the National Drug Control Master Plan for 2016-2020 outlines nine priority areas:

1. Formulation and improvement of legal instruments concerning narcotic problems;
2. Data/Information collection and analysis;
3. Education/Training/Dissemination of the laws and adverse consequences from drug abuse;
4. Treatment and vocational training for drug addicts;
5. Alternative development, replacing opium poppy and cannabis cultivation;
6. Law enforcement;
7. Precursor control, analysis and test of drug use;
8. International cooperation; and
9. Streamlining the organisational machinery of the national commission for drug control and supervision at central and local level.

The Illicit Drug Sector Working Group (IDSWG) forms part of the National Round Table Process and constitutes the sectoral framework for donor coordination in the counter-narcotics sector in Laos. The IDSWG is chaired by LCDC, and co-chaired by the Mini Dublin Group Chair (Australia or Japan on a yearly rotational basis) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

2.2 Regional response

Laos is working with a number of countries of the region to provide a collective response for countering narcotics. Laos, for example, takes part in the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle (2017-2019) and the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs (2016-2025). In late 2018 Laos took turn temporarily hosting the Safe Mekong Coordination Centre in Vientiane. Laos is also a signatory to The Mekong Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control.

3.0 Update on counter-narcotics programs supported by development partners

3.1 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNODC has continued to work with Luxembourg and the United States to deliver Alternative Development programming in Huapanh province, where supported communities are in the process of transitioning to coffee and establishing a jointly owned cooperative. UNODC has also worked with the government and the United States on introducing Community Based Treatment Services (CBT) to locations across the country. CBT services have now been established in 28 district hospitals in six provinces. In December 2017, the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme established a first Container Control Unit in Lao PDR – in Thanaleng at the Thai-Lao border near Vientiane. The unit is designed to improve profiling of containers in order to select high-risk containers for inspection. UNODC has also continued its work with Australia and Canada on supporting the Lao government in enhancing cross-border cooperation through a network of 15 Border Liaison Offices in hotspot border locations across the country. Opening of further BLO locations have been agreed with the Lao Government, and 7 potential new locations have been identified. The programme targets drugs and precursor chemicals, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS), wildlife and timber, and dumping of hazardous waste.

3.2 United States

The United States continues its work to prevent and treat drug use disorders in Laos by strengthening the Community Based Treatment (CBT) system. Support will build the capacity of local healthcare professionals on evidence-based treatment and care, provide technical assistance to CBT centers, and expand the use of the Universal Prevention Curriculum. The United States also supports an alternative development project being done in Houaphan Province by UNODC, as well as training and limited operational expenses for the Lao drug control police and LCDC. The United States also supports the Lao government in enhancing border security through an agreement with Lao Customs Department, and provides equipment and training to the Customs Department through this agreement.

3.3 Japan

Japan continues to provide annual training courses to Lao Government officials on drug crime control. Japan also supports global and regional activities which cover the Golden Triangle through contribution to UNODC such as the Global SMART (Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends) program. Japan is also financially supporting iTWIN, a Japan/Laos project conducted by Interpol in 2019 to enhance the capacity of Interpol's Global Police Secure Communications System within Laos. It aims to prevent and combat transnational crime including drug trafficking through the systematic screening of passengers and travel documents at border crossings.

3.4 Luxembourg

Luxembourg is supporting an alternative development project in Houaphanh Province implemented by UNODC. The project started its implementation in early 2016. A second phase of the project started in January 2019.

3.5 Australia

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) continues to provide law enforcement training and equipment for Lao police engaged in anti-narcotics and other transnational crimes. Increasing direct operational cooperation between the AFP and Ministry of Public Security has resulted in successful operational outcomes for both Laos and Australia, resulting in drug seizures and arrests as a result of direct cooperation and ongoing organized crime cooperation. Australia, through the Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force, also supports an ongoing program of border law enforcement and border management capacity building with Lao immigration and customs officials to strengthen Laos' border management systems and border integrity. On 1 August 2019, Australia announced a new \$30 million initiative to help combat transnational crime in the Mekong region. The Mekong-Australia Program: Transnational Crime (MAP-TNC) is an eight-year investment that will promote cross-border cooperation between Mekong countries, supporting their efforts to tackle serious threats such as drug trafficking, child sexual exploitation and financial crimes.

3.6 European Union (EU)

The EU and its Member States have been quite active in the past in providing support through alternative development projects in Northern Laos. The last EU project came to an end in late 2015. The EU remains fully committed to recognising drug production and use as a primary concern for Laos and the region, and is currently exploring further options for support, notably through enhanced cooperation in the realm of anti-money laundering. The EU acknowledges the positive developments in the newly adopted Penal code, though regrets that capital punishment is still retained for drug-related offenses, and stands ready to discuss further the issue in the upcoming EU-Laos Human Rights Dialogue.

3.7 United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has recently funded two programs supporting Lao Customs in combatting the illegal trade in wildlife and bulk cash smuggling. This support included anti-cash courier training, and an assessment of Wattay International Airport and the Friendship Bridge border crossing with regard to border security and smuggling.

3.8 Canada

In addition to supporting the establishment of Border Liaison Offices, Canada funded a 3-year project (2016-2018) by the International Organisation for Migration to create an induction manual for Lao border officials and train 22 Master Trainers on a variety of border management skills, including recognition of criminal activity. Canada is also providing multi-year support to the Institute for Legal Support and Technical Assistance for its capacity-building workshops to help Lao police and judicial authorities disrupt and prosecute transnational organised crime, particularly money laundering.

4.0 Identification of needs for external assistance

Needs identified during the elaboration of the 2016 – 2020 National Drug Control Master Plan remain relevant in 2019. MPS has some capability development partners but requires more support to enable better outcomes to reduce the impact of organized crime and drug trafficking in Laos. This includes training in core areas such as criminal intelligence, border management, integrated border management, narcotics investigations, language training and forensics capability.

Key requests for support presented by LCDC at the 2019 Mini Dublin Group meeting include:

- Continued cooperation with international organisations and neighbouring countries for exchange of information and sharing of good practices and experiences;
- Strengthening of law enforcement authorities' capacity in the field of identification of drugs, chemical precursors and key trafficking routes;
- Training for drug law enforcement agencies working at key checkpoints;
- Combining border enforcement cooperation mechanisms with Safe Mekong Operation, and promoting greater cooperation between MOU Countries.
- Continued focus on providing sustainable Alternative Development to opium producing communities
- Enhanced availability of evidence based treatment for people who use drugs
-

4.1 Mini Dublin Group coordination

On 12 July 2019, a field visit to the first Friendship Bridge between Thailand and Laos in Vientiane's Hadsaifong district was organised by the Australian Embassy and LCDC for members of the Mini Dublin Group. The visit was an opportunity to better understand the role of Lao customs and immigration officials in combating drug trafficking and other criminal activities. A Mini Dublin Group-IDSWG meeting was held on 23 August 2019.

4.2 Mini Dublin Group's assessment of emerging threats / trends

Enhanced regional transport infrastructure and connectivity following the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community has only increased the challenges for Lao authorities in combatting narcotics trafficking, production, use, and drug related crime. Southeast Asia's public security agencies have not kept pace with regional economic integration. ASEAN governments have invested heavily in infrastructure (for example the Kunming to Vientiane railway in Laos) and ambitious cross-border trade pacts, but they have not made parallel investments in public security.

The region has seen a large increase in new casinos following a crackdown on money laundering activities in Macau and China. As of January 2019, there were 230 licensed casinos in Southeast Asia, many considered to offer platforms for transitional organized crime. Proceeds from organized crime in the Mekong sub-region is estimated to be approximately \$100 billion/year.

Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have become a common tool in Southeast Asia to attract investments and stimulate economic development. However government regulation and oversight of SEZs are often lax, making them targets for organized crime.

Seizures of methamphetamine (meth) have more than tripled in East and Southeast Asia between 2013 and 2018. The displacement of organized crime groups from China to northern and eastern Myanmar, known as the Golden Triangle, has led to uninterrupted flows of meth from Myanmar since 2015. There is also evidence of increasing flows of meth to Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam to evade law enforcement detection in Thailand.

Laos remains primarily a transit country for tablets, crystals, and chemical precursors. Methamphetamine seizures have tripled in Laos since 2015. In 2018 alone Lao authorities seized more than 21 million methamphetamine tablets and 1.8 tons of crystalline methamphetamine.

The production of methamphetamine depends on supply precursor chemicals. Ephedrine is being trafficked from China, India, and Thailand into Myanmar, but large quantities of precursors go undetected.

4.3 Mini Dublin Group's recommendations for strengthening counter-narcotics initiatives

1. Improve drug treatment centers to support victims of drug addiction in their treatment and rehabilitation both mentally and physically
 - Important work has been done under the current Drug Control Master Plan on introducing Community Based Treatment
 - Need for National Drug Use Survey to improve knowledge on drug use patterns
 - Scale up evidence-based treatment for users of Amphetamine Type stimulants

2. Promote sustainable Alternative Development to opium poppy cultivation and other plantation containing addictive substances.
3. Continue global and regional cooperation with neighboring countries and development partners for intelligence and information exchange and sharing of good practices and experiences
 - Strengthen systems for data gathering and intelligence sharing
 - Border Liaison Offices should be strengthened and expanded to new locations
4. Improve control and detection of chemical precursors
 - Need to strengthen forensic drug laboratories and Law enforcement to identify shifts in the precursor chemical market
 - Need to develop a regional policy for precursor control
5. Continue improvement of drug-related judicial instruments, making them more effective and relevant.
 - Promote drug prevention through drug education and anti-drug campaign to raise awareness in society, particularly among youth, of negative impacts and danger of drugs.

MYANMAR

1.0 General Situation

1.1 Opium and opiates

Myanmar continues to be considered to be the second largest producer of opium in the world, behind Afghanistan. East Asia's illicit opiate industry value is estimated at \$16.3 billion per year, the majority of which is driven from Myanmar opium/heroin.

According to the UNODC the total area under opium poppy cultivation in Myanmar in 2018 was estimated at 37,300 hectares compared with 41,000 hectares in 2017. This represents a decrease of 10% since last year and a 35% decrease from 2013. The 2018 UNODC survey found that the Shan region of Myanmar accounted for approximately 90% of the national opium poppy cultivation in 2018.

The average yield per hectare was 14kg compared with 13.4kg per hectare in 2017. This slight increase in yield estimate in 2018 in part offset the decline in production area. Resulting in a potential production of 520 tons in 2018 compared with 550 tons in 2017 - a 40% reduction compared with 2013. The dry price for opium has decreased by 36% over the last three years to USD 154 per kilogram.

1.2 Amphetamines (ATS)

Myanmar has seen a steep increase in the manufacturing of synthetic drugs especially methamphetamine, particularly in northern Myanmar. A significant contributing factor seems to be the heavy law enforcement suppression effort in China that displaced drug syndicates, forcing them to migrate production out of China.

Transnational organized criminal groups are operating in Myanmar with militias and ethnic armed groups to manufacture and traffic crystalline and tablet methamphetamine. In South East Asia and neighbouring East Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Bangladesh the methamphetamine market are now estimated to be worth between USD 30.3 billion and USD 61.4 billion annually.

Significant increases in methamphetamine seizures have been observed with at least 120 tons seized in 2018. Thailand has alone seized more than 50% of the total confirmed seizures in this period. Increasing flow of methamphetamine is now flowing to Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam in an effort to circumvent the law enforcement detection in Thailand.

Myanmar is perceived to be the main country of origin of methamphetamine tablets seized throughout the Mekong region. Reports of methamphetamine tablets originating in Myanmar and seized in China and Thailand indicate that increasing quantities are being trafficked from Myanmar across the shared borders of those countries.

The illicit production of ATS is aided significantly by the use of precursor chemicals which are trafficked into eastern Myanmar from India and China. There continues to be a shift in the production practices for methamphetamine from sourcing chemicals, as well as processed and licit pharmaceutical preparations, to sourcing raw precursor chemicals in bulk. There is also a trend of large scale synthetic drug production sites being located in politically unstable areas in Myanmar.

1.3 Drug Use and Treatment

In Myanmar, there is still high use of both heroin and opium. However, the MPF now considers ATS the primary drug of use. Opiate use has decreased over recent years, a reduction which coincides with a reported increase in the use of methamphetamine pills (AKA Yaba). Of concern in relation to this reported increase in ATS use is the fact that, like other countries in this region, drug treatment facilities in Myanmar are vastly under-resourced and possess no real treatment facilities specifically designed to treat ATS dependency. The majority of the approximate 8,000 new admission patients were heroin users at 88% of the total for 2018. With ATS making up 10% and opium 2%.

1.4 Challenges in Border Areas

As noted above, most domestic opium cultivation, and heroin and ATS production, occurs in Shan State and, particularly, in the eastern areas along the border with China. While the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed in October 2015, these border areas, most of which are still controlled by various armed ethnic groups, remain regularly affected by sporadic armed conflict between state and non-state actors, as well as between competing non-state armed groups. The continuing situation of human insecurity that is evident in many areas of Shan State – but specifically along the eastern border – is leading to increases in ATS production, and illicit drug trafficking. This is, in turn, leading to a further deterioration in the security environment of these areas.

2.0 Update on Myanmar's Anti-Drug Strategy

2.1 Changes/Additions to the Counter-Narcotics Institutional Framework

There have been no significant changes to Myanmar's counter-narcotics institutional framework over the last year.

3.0 Update on Major Bilateral and Multilateral Counter Narcotics Programmes

3.1 UNODC

The UNODC mandate is to assist Member States to address the salient threats posed by drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. UNODC addresses rule of law problems by working in the following areas: trafficking, governance and criminal justice. UNODC tackles health and development challenges through its drug demand reduction, HIV-AIDS and sustainable livelihood work.

Current interventions in Myanmar were consolidated into a new UNODC Country Programme for Myanmar (2014-2017) which has now been extended until the end of 2020. Current Country Programme thematic areas of support include assistance in illicit trafficking and law enforcement, anti-corruption, criminal justice reform, HIV and drug demand reduction and alternative livelihoods for opium poppy growing communities.

Other support provided for drug and health related issues are:

- a. The near finalization of the National Strategic Plan on Drug Control (2019-2023).
- b. Supporting harm reduction interventions by creating enabling environments through harm reduction township steering committees for harm reduction (Kalay, Myitkyina and Lashio)
- c. Community based treatment and care services for people who use drugs initiated (Pilot programme in Kalay Township)
- d. Community based drug use prevention introduced in villages of AD programme in Hopong and Loilem Townships

3.1.1 Alternative Development

UNODC supports the development of sustainable livelihood alternatives for opium poppy growing in a programme that now covers 958 hectares. This includes 926 hectares of coffee, 17 hectares of tea and 15 hectares of avocados. . A total of 1,020 beneficiary farmers benefit from permanent and day-to-day technical assistance on alternative development provided by UNODC.

3.1.2 Crime Prevention Strategy

UNODC supported the Myanmar Ministry of Home Affairs in launching the first National Crime Prevention Strategy in May 2019. The strategy has the following four objectives:

- a. To prevent risk of crimes
- b. To identify priority areas for crime prevention within the first implemented time period (2018- 2020),
- c. To successfully implement the longer-term crime prevention strategy based on a multi-sectoral approach
- d. To specifically include the focus area of preventing the widespread drug abuse and drug trafficking among youth

3.2 Australia

Australia, through the Australian Federal Police (AFP), work closely with MPF in conducting joint investigations on organized crime activity particularly involved the production and trafficking of narcotics across the region. There is a direct nexus between Myanmar and Australia in relation to transnational serious and organized crime.

Australia, through the Australian Border Force (ABF), is also supporting capability development amongst Myanmar's border agencies by providing specialised equipment and technical training in the fields of Intelligence Analysis and Counter Proliferation to the Myanmar Customs and Immigration Departments. ABF provides direct, bilateral support to Myanmar Customs' Port Control Unit at Yangon seaport. This support includes equipment, training and mentoring of officers in the targeting, examination and detection of illicit products and narcotics.

ABF provides maritime security training, technical support and equipment to the MPF Maritime Policing Division. This includes the provision of vessel search and intervention training, intelligence led vessel targeting with a focus on improving regional cooperation. ABF continue to provide the Maritime Policing Division with equipment as part of the overall training package.

Australia and Myanmar share significant concerns in regards to the rapid growth of narcotics production in the Shan State of Myanmar, particular in conflict affected areas where ethnic militia have developed into organized crime groups exploiting the porous northern borders of Myanmar to conduct the unchecked importation of chemicals and manufacturing equipment that enables industrial scale drug production. Territory under the control of militias is exploited to intentionally engage in the illicit production and trafficking of narcotics within a large service and supply market which enables the creation of large amounts of proceeds of crime.

Australia is a highly profitable market for Myanmar produced narcotics which are largely produced and trafficked by organized crime groups with vested interests from across the Region and located outside Myanmar. It is highly likely that about 60% of Australia's crystal methamphetamine is produced in Myanmar.

MPF continues to work against those groups engaged in drug production and trafficking, with many good outcomes. MPF is significantly constrained by legislative gaps and lack of modern powers that enable organized crime investigations and the denial of its ability to deliver law and order to all areas of Myanmar. The AFP continues to work closely with MPF to enhance its capability through the provision of operational and strategic training initiatives. Further capability development is required to better enable MPF to more fully address future challenges.

3.3 Japan

The Japanese Government continues to support measures to eradicate global drug issues. To mitigate opium poppy cultivation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has implemented a project to promote buckwheat cultivation as a substitute crop for poppy from 1999 to 2004. The project provided technical skills on buckwheat production with the exporting market in Japan for farmers in seven townships near the Chinese border, where the majority of the farmers were making their living heavily from opium poppy production. Along with such a technical cooperation, JICA supported infrastructure development in the area by implementing three grant aid projects for water supply, roads, and electricity to improve the condition of local livelihood.

This package of the assistance was then followed by another technical cooperation project in order for uninterruptedly contributing to eradicate opium poppy cultivation and to reduce poverty in Kokang Region from 2005 to 2011 through providing a comprehensive socio-economic development assistance in infrastructure, agriculture, livelihood improvement, health and education. Prior to the comprehensive development supports, the project provided emergency relief (seed, fertilizer, mosquito net for malaria control, etc.) as well as road improvement for the people in severe poverty who were struggling right after the ban of poppy cultivation. From 2014 to 2019, the third technical cooperation project in the Northern part of Shan State was implemented, mainly in villages near Lashio due to security situations, aiming at stabilizing the livelihood of ex-opium poppy farmers through strengthening farming skills and diversifying income sources.

To secure sustainability of the project activities, the project intensified building capacity of the Alternative Development (AD) Trainers, who lead and support villagers to establish a solid means of improving livelihood. The Ministry of Border Affairs, the main counterpart of the project, has been carrying out AD trainer training after the completion of the project to increase the number and to strengthening the AD resources to spread the legacy of the project not only in Shan State, but other border areas of Myanmar. Furthermore, for another approach to stabilize and to improve the source of income to discourage villagers from re-cultivation of opium poppy in Shan State, JICA has launched a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) project since 2018. A private Japanese company introduces its post-harvest, processing, and transporting technologies to bring about a new business model which promises the higher income to villagers in the Southern Shan State.

The Japanese Government also provide support to the UNODC for the global SMART (Synthetics Monitoring: Analysis, Reporting and Trends) Programme. In 2018 Japan provided US\$785,000 to support the programme to monitors global and regional trend on methamphetamine and dangerous drugs like New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), to monitor opium production in Myanmar through Myanmar Opium Poppy Survey and to conduct workshops that allow net provider and governments to share information, achievements and challenges to break linkage between terrorism and drugs through enhancing environment for international operation on drug trafficking on the internet.

3.4 United States of America

The United States provides substantial assistance to support law enforcement, counternarcotic, and rule of law activities in Myanmar. In 2018, U.S. assistance in these sectors remained at approximately \$11 million, and U.S. assistance will likely continue at a similar level in 2019. The United States continues to implement a range of programs to assist Myanmar to address both the demand and supply sides of the narcotics problems.

On the demand side, U.S. efforts in the public health, education, and rehabilitation sectors are led by USAID, the Centre for Disease Control (CDC), and the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL). Programming in public health includes components related to harm reduction, demand reduction, and training of health care professionals, with a focus on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS. In education and prevention, programming focuses on partnerships with grassroots and civil society organizations that engage youth populations, community leaders, and education professionals on ways to address drug use, and on implementing public information campaigns. Programming on drug rehabilitation remains in a nascent stage, with USAID announcing a Local Works program in 2018 to improve support services to address drug addiction and recovery including livelihoods activities and community responses to drug use. Government of Myanmar partners include the Ministries of Health and Sports; Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement; and Education. The U.S. also works with UNAIDS, UNODC and a wide range of international and local non-governmental and civil society organizations.

On the supply side, U.S. assistance is based on technical assistance, training, and equipment donations to law enforcement and justice institutions. The Embassy's Drug Enforcement Administration Country Office engages with the Myanmar Police Force's Drug Enforcement Division (DED) on developing the capacity to interdict and investigate drug production and trafficking networks, complemented by INL's support for sending DED officers for technical training at the U.S. Government's International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok and study trips to the United States. The Embassy's Department of Justice Resident Legal Advisor engages with the Union Attorney General's Office (UAGO) and other criminal justice stakeholders on developing capacity to address transnational organized crime generally, and narcotics trafficking and money laundering specifically. Aside from the DED and UAGO, the United States engages with the Anti-Corruption Commission, Supreme Court, and Financial Intelligence Unit, often providing their staff with opportunities for training locally, in Bangkok, and the United States.

3.5 Germany

Germany supports UNODC in the second phase of the ongoing Alternative Development Project in South Shan State that was launched in 2014. The second project phase focuses on the sustainability and creation of a conducive agricultural environment for the over 1000 beneficiary farmer households who gave up illicit opium poppy cultivation in Phase I of the project and are now involved in the cultivation of coffee, tea and other long-term cash crops. The beneficiary farmer households are now in need of significant support in developing their capacity to manage the cooperative, making it sustainable, improving post-harvest processes, and further expanding reforestation and sustainable use of natural resources in the project areas. Green Gold cooperative has exported its first container of selected coffee to the European market in 2018 signing a 5-year partnership agreement with French company Malongo for the commercialization of its harvests under fair-trade conditions.

This represented an important milestone for the community of farmers in southern Shan State which has made important strides in the production and sale of coffee. It also represents a positive development to offer farmers a sustainable livelihood alternative to opium poppy cultivation.

The activities focus on sustaining and consolidating the progress made during Phase I, covering a 3-year period from 2018 through 2020 with a budget of EUR 2.1 million.

4.0 Prioritised Identification of Needs for External Assistance

- Continued and enhanced international cooperation, including the neighbouring countries, and capacity building with Myanmar law enforcement agencies and Mekong Region on counter narcotics.
- Continued programmes on alternate development to improve the livelihood of former poppy cultivating communities, including in newly-developed poppy cultivation areas, and addressing food security issues.
- Continued surveys and research on opium, synthetic drugs and ATS production.
- Treatment and rehabilitation of addicts and former addicts with an emphasis on supporting methadone programs to treat drug addiction.

5.0 Mini-Dublin Group Assessment of Needs

5.1 Emerging Threats/Trends

Opium poppy cultivation in Myanmar saw continued to see year-on-year increases in cultivation area from 2006 to 2013. Since 2013, cultivation has remained relatively stable. Further, the production and trafficking of other illicit drugs, most notably ATS and its precursors, has continued to increase. The Myanmar Police Force now considered ATS the primary drug of use in Myanmar. Continued inaccessibility, due to security reasons, to the main areas where illicit drug crop cultivation and drug production occurs continues to represent a considerable challenge to the anti-narcotics efforts by the Myanmar Government and the international community.

Household food insecurity and its apparent relationship to household engagement or re-engagement with illicit drug cultivation and production is a significant, emerging threat in Myanmar.

Also of concern is the apparent tightening of controls to access for UN agencies and donors providing assistance for former poppy farmers in certain areas. Although this partly reflects ongoing security issues in these areas, members consider that the controls to geographic access may be going beyond what is necessary. The lack of access to these areas, which in some cases do not fall under regular government control, hinders domestic anti-narcotic efforts.

5.2 Political Initiatives

The Myanmar Government continues to publicise their determination to tackle narcotics production through its extended 20-year narcotics elimination plan, and has revised the structure of CCDAC anti-narcotic teams across the country, which has included the creation of 24 new ANTF units. However, its activities have been hampered by insufficient funds and inaccessibility to many areas where illicit drugs cultivation and production takes place. The successful implementation of the 20 year plan will depend also on the situation in the Special Region border areas, the political will of the new government continuing through the 2015 election, and continued, expanded assistance from the international community.

5.3 Recommendations

- That the joint chairs, Australia and Japan, continue to update the document which outlines current and previous anti-narcotics programs in Myanmar and which can be used as a resource to avoid duplication of effort and identify key gaps.

- That the international community take into account the significant shift toward the production and use of synthetic drugs, specifically methamphetamine, both in Myanmar and the region, when developing programs and engaging with government interlocutors. That shift has serious implications for efforts to curb the supply of illicit drugs, but also requires increased attention to the broad use of, and growing addition to, of methamphetamines throughout Myanmar.
- That the shift to synthetic drug production requires increased scrutiny on the flow of precursor chemicals from China and India into Myanmar, and increased analysis of and attention to the sources of those precursor chemicals.
- That members formally recognize narcotics production and trafficking among the key drivers of the conflicts in Shan State, taking into account of the UNODC record that particular armed groups are directly participating in the manufacture and trans-border smuggling of methamphetamines. The peace process and the production of narcotics are inextricably linked, and engagements on the peace process must take into account the challenges presented by parties to the conflict that are engaged in the drug trade.
- That members urge Myanmar to provide greater transparency to developments in drug production areas in Shan State. Lack of access to those areas by civilian law enforcement institutions inhibits their ability to develop interdiction strategies. Members also urge Myanmar to facilitate access to UN agencies, INGOs, and bilateral donors into areas of illicit drug cultivation and production concern in order to develop programming that helps farmers turn away from growing poppy illicitly. This access would include the timely provision of necessary visas and travel authorisations for international staff.
- That members encourage Myanmar and its neighbours, chiefly China and the other Mekong countries, at the bilateral level and, where appropriate, in multilateral fora to continue to work closely with each other on counter-narcotics strategies.
- That members encourage Myanmar to develop legal tools and investigative processes to tackle narcotics trafficking, including Myanmar inter-state trafficking and to authorize use of special investigative techniques, such as controlled purchases. Members should consider means of supporting Myanmar law enforcement capacity to conduct complex investigations and prosecute drug trafficking networks and high-ranking narcotics figures.
- That members encourage Myanmar's neighbours to work more closely with the international organisations engaged in counter-narcotics in Myanmar.

- That members seek to strengthen their assistance for alternative development (income substitution, community development, construction of infrastructure) in former poppy-growing areas, recognizing that it is one part of a broader set of strategies to fight narcotics production.
- That members consider increasing support for efforts to address the demand for, and use of, illicit narcotics. This support would include training and development of health, education, and social welfare personnel, and the development of programs that address treating drug users and addicts; educating populations about the dangers of drug use; and provision of rehabilitation services for former drug users. Members should continue support for human resource capacity-building and for scaling up HIV prevention and treatment services (i.e. treatment and care, harm reduction and social reintegration) for people who use drugs in Myanmar, and in particular, people who inject drugs.
- That members continue to support Myanmar in the implementation of its national drug control policy, shifting from a punitive approach to a broader spectrum of activities, including public health and development approaches.
- That members support governments of the Mekong region strengthen and further secure their borders through stronger and more coordinated border liaison offices.
- That members further coordinate with the Myanmar Government to identify illicit money flows from the drug trade and address money laundering. Members should encourage narcotics investigators to work more closely with anti-corruption and financial investigation officials within Myanmar, and with regional international partners. Members should encourage Myanmar to improve regulation on informal cash remittance systems.
- That members encourage governments of the Mekong region and especially Myanmar's neighbours which have huge chemical industry to coordinate and collaborate the precursor control.
- Members should consider the provision of additional support to Myanmar law enforcement and border agencies such as customs to assist in Myanmar's anti-narcotic efforts and address issues of uneven capacity.

VIETNAM

1.0 General Situation - Drug trafficking

According to the Ministry of Public Security, by June 2019, Vietnam's drug law enforcement agencies detected more than 13,000 cases, arrested more than 20,000 suspects and seized more than 4.6 tons and 500,000 tablets of synthetic drugs, 750kg of heroin and 571 kg of dried cannabis. Seizures of methamphetamine and cannabis have dramatically increased. This reflects the trend of their trade and usage, especially methamphetamine, in the region.

The production and shipment of precursor materials has also become a major concern in Viet Nam. In early August 2019, the Ministry of Public Security's Counter-Narcotics Department and other law enforcement agencies dismantled one clandestine laboratory in Kon Tum Province and seized 13 tons of chemical precursors which would be used to produce synthetic drugs.

Drug type	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Heroin	607.8 kg	906.7 kg	1,600 kg	750 kg
Opium poppy	92.13 kg	92,13 kg	196 kg	156.4kg
Cannabis	1,500 kg	376.4 kg (raw) 111 kg (dried)	254 kg (dried)	571 kg (dried)
Synthetic drugs	839.63 kg 427,655 tablets	859,6 kg 979,487 tablets	1,800 kg 1,400,00 0 tablets	4,625 kg 500,000 tablets
Cases	19,333	22,346	24,600	13,000
Offenders	31,001	34,494	37,800	20,000

2.0 Drugs and health

By the end of 2018, there were 225,099 registered drug users in Vietnam according to the Ministry of Public Security – a slight increase of around 2,500 people from 2017. Overall, the number of registered drug users have increased in 58 provinces out of total 63 Vietnamese provinces. Most of the newly registered drug users are users of synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances.

The statistics also reflect a new trend of drug usage in Vietnam as there is a dramatic increase in the number of amphetamine-type stimulant (ATS) dependent people (almost 4 times higher than the proportion of synthetic drugs users in 2014 – 14.5%). The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs estimates that around 75% of drug users are ATS dependent people.

The Government estimates that the actual number of drug dependent people is much higher, particularly ATS users, given the sharp increase in synthetic drugs seizures in 2016, a source of serious concern to the Government of Viet Nam. According to the Ministry of Health, 9.3% of drug dependent people are living with HIV.

With regards to the transformation of the drug rehabilitation centres, according to the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, by November 2018, there remained 120 drug rehabilitation centres, of which 105 are State-run. This is a decrease of 25 centres from 2014. Among the 105 State-run centres, 6 are only for compulsory drug rehabilitation (three in Hanoi and three in Ho Chi Minh City), 18 are for voluntary and methadone treatment, 79 are mixed of compulsory, voluntary Methadone treatment, and management of people without stable residential places, and two centres are used for drug addicts who do not have permanent residence.

By April 2019, the total number of persons under drug rehabilitation programs was 38,441 people: Among these 26,494 people are participating in the compulsory programs under Court Orders; 3,923 people are voluntarily rehabilitating at state-run centres; 3,461 people are rehabilitating at non-public centres and 4,563 people are voluntarily rehabilitating at social centres for people without permanent residence.

Up to July 2018, 52,677 persons received methadone maintenance therapy in 316 clinics.

3.0 Update on the country's anti-drugs strategy

The Viet Nam Government approved a 'National Strategy on Drug Control and Prevention in Viet Nam to 2020, with a Vision to 2030'. As part of a broader legislative review, the revised Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code have been approved by the National Assembly recently and came into effect since 2018.

On 27 December 2013, the Government approved a ‘Decision on the Drug Rehabilitation Renovation Plan (Renovation Plan) for the period 2013-2020’. The plan aims to diversify drug dependence treatment models, scale up community-based and voluntary treatment centres (including MMT clinics) and gradually reduce the number of drug users held in compulsory treatment centres (“06 centres”). It also sets out the responsibilities of relevant national agencies; for example to increase professional capacity for better treatment and care of drug dependent people; to establish professional standards in drug treatment and care and to develop sufficient legislative and institutional frameworks to support these efforts. However, the Renovation Plan still foresees 6 centres opening by 2020, which is of serious concern to the UN and development partners.

4.0 Update on major bilateral and multilateral counter-narcotics programs

4.1 Australia

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) has offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) and manages the Vietnam-Australia Joint Transnational Crime Centre (HCMC). The AFP is actively involved with the Police Investigation Department on Drug Related Crimes, Ministry of Public Security, and supports a range of policy discussions on countering narcotics and identifying emerging transnational crime threats such as Violent Criminal Groups and their involvement in narcotics trafficking. Whilst heroin remains a trafficked commodity, the amount of methamphetamine is rising sharply but detections of precursor chemicals from Vietnam to Australia have continued a downward trend. Australia remains a market of choice for narcotics trafficking due to the high rate of consumption per capita and significant monetary returns on investment. The major criminal connections between Australia and Vietnam are mostly between the Vietnamese communities in Sydney and Melbourne and those in HCMC, primarily because of the historical links between Vietnamese communities in Australia and southern Vietnam, coupled with direct air and sea cargo routes to Australia. As a result, HCMC in particular acts as a funnel for illicit drugs and/or precursors trafficked from or through Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. Other regions (for example South American and African) criminal syndicates are beginning to exploit the established logistics pathways via Vietnam. Significant joint counter narcotics investigations continue to be conducted, highlighting the effectiveness of the working relationship between the AFP and the Police Investigation Department on Drug Related Crimes. Increasingly, other law enforcement agencies are becoming involved in such joint investigations as the transnational links to this crime type extend beyond just Australia and Vietnam. The death penalty implications for drug offenders in Vietnam remain problematic for Australian law enforcement given Australia's strong objection to the death penalty in all forms. The death penalty hinders more robust intelligence exchange between our countries.

Trafficking routes from Laos and Cambodia into Vietnam, especially via Son La, Nghe An and Tay Ninh Province, remain of concern for the AFP and increasing the capacity and capabilities of law enforcement in these areas remains a priority. The laundering of the proceeds of drug trafficking activity (including border controlled substances imported into Australia and as the result of domestic cannabis cultivation by Vietnamese groups in Australia) back to Vietnam is an area the AFP continues to progress with its Vietnamese counterparts. Money Laundering investigations remain problematic despite the amendments to the Penal Code which came into force in January 2018.

4.2 European Union

The European Union currently has no specific cooperation programs on drugs or crime in Vietnam but maintains liaison contact with the authorities. One of the stated aims of the EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, signed in 2012, is collaboration in the areas of combating organised crime, money laundering and illicit drugs, so closer cooperation over the medium term is a possibility. Vietnam was included in the 2009-2012 EU-ASEAN Migration and Border Management Program, created to support the development of an efficient and coherent Integrated Border Management System at selected main border crossing points. One of its main objectives was to facilitate the legal movements of goods and persons, whilst combating transnational crime, illegal migration and people trafficking. The EU also funds targeted health programs empowering populations at higher risk of HIV infection, strengthening HIV care, prevention and treatment in the country. Vietnam is also part of the EU-UNODC Joint Initiative for Supporting Southeast Asian Countries to Counter Terrorism that delivers expertise and training in related activities, including combating transnational organised crime and anti-money laundering.

4.3 France

France has no specific programs on drug-related issues with the Vietnamese authorities but usually conducts one training session by year for about 40 law enforcement officers of Vietnamese counter-narcotics department (Ministry of Public Security). In addition, France sets up an annual cooperation program related to serious crime issues including fight against illegal migration networks, child sexual abuse and exploitation, falsified medicines and cyber-crime. French police cooperation organizes working visits and exchanges, regional experts working groups and regional seminars on issues related to crime in order to strengthen its legal cooperation framework with Vietnamese authorities

4.4 United Kingdom

The UK has strengthened its law enforcement footprint in Vietnam, and has continued to build on existing relationships. UK co-operation with Vietnam is currently very good but organised crime continues to evolve and it is essential that the UK and Vietnam work even more closely to tackle shared threats. To that end, the UK opened a National Crime Agency Liaison Office (NCA) in Hanoi in 2012, covering Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. This allowed for a more dedicated relationship with the Ministry of Public Security and other facets of law enforcement in Vietnam, which to date has yielded a number of joint operations and successful arrests and prosecutions.

The 39th ASEANAPOL Conference took place in Hanoi from 17 – 20 September 2019. The conference, attended by all 10 ASEAN Police Commissioners, 10 Dialogue Partners, 6 Observers and the ASEANAPOL Secretariat, ratified the UK's enhanced status as a Dialogue Partner. This status is a first for UK, HMG in an ASEAN forum (in our own right, rather than part of the EU) and a good precedent for other ASEAN bodies. This will significantly enhance our inter-agency coordination and cooperation not only with Vietnam but with the wider ASEANAPOL community.

Although there is little intelligence to show that controlled drugs manufactured in, or transiting through, Vietnam are destined for the UK, Vietnamese nationals dominate cannabis cultivation in the UK, with most UK cannabis farms staffed or run by Vietnamese illegal immigrants. The money generated by cannabis cultivation in the UK is estimated to be between GBP 300 million and GBP 800 million per year. Proceeds of Vietnamese-run criminal enterprises are known to be sent back to Vietnam through the use of individual couriers or via legitimate Vietnamese businesses. Moreover, abuse of UK and Vietnam banks, and in particular the accounts of legitimate students, is not uncommon. The laundering of the proceeds of crime generated by the cultivation and distribution of narcotics is a key area of work for NCA. NCA has identified opportunities for joint work with the State Bank of Vietnam's Anti-Money Laundering Department, with whom the NCA will sign an intelligence exchange MOU in 2014. Following a meeting with the State Bank of Vietnam this week, the MOU is in the final stages with final sign off expected imminently. The NCA also actively works with the MPS Economic Crime Command and Vietnam Customs, and is currently looking at other joint initiatives with UNODC. In February 2014 the NCA, with the UNODC, delivered a financial investigation training module to the People's Police Academy of Vietnam, which has now been incorporated into the curriculum for new entrants. Criminal vendettas and rivalry between crime groups involved in cannabis cultivation have also resulted in a number of kidnappings and murders in the UK Vietnamese community. NCA and the UK Human Trafficking Centre work closely with ACPO Forces in England and Wales, with significant operational support from Vietnamese law enforcement, to tackle this criminal threat.

The NCA continue in capacity building with the Vietnamese Law Enforcement (MPS & PPA), with training courses having taken place in relation to Modern Slavery human trafficking and Money Laundering. Further training is planned in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation / online for MPS, members of the Judiciary, etc. both in Hanoi and HCMC in November 2019 with further cyber / cryptocurrency training planned for Dec 2019.

Last year in the UK, Vietnam had the second highest number of victims (over 700) of Modern Slavery / Human Trafficking who had entered the National referral mechanism.

In the near future, a significant step forward will be the secondment of 2 MPS Police officers to the UK for a period of 12 months. This will be a first for the NCA/Vietnamese MPS and UK Policing secondments.

4.5 Japan

There has been a few reported narcotics trafficking case from Vietnam to Japan in recent years. In Japan, most drug trafficking arrests relate to ATS cases. The recent increase in ATS trafficking cases in Vietnam is a trend to which we should pay attention. Japan currently has no specific bilateral cooperation programs on drug-control issues.

On the other hand, Japan provided a couple of multilateral cooperation programs on the issues. At first, Japan provided a short-term training course titled “Control of Drug Offences” through the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) from 25 August to 11 September 2019 in Tokyo. At that training course, an officer working for Ministry of Public Security attended with other officers from some target countries.

Next, Japan has been hosting the Asia-Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference (ADEC) in Tokyo. This year, the 24th ADEC was held from 26-28 February, and over 30 countries including Vietnam attended and discussed the latest trends in illicit drugs in the Asia-Pacific region and shared information about effective measures to counter drug trafficking.

The Government of Japan has been promoting “human security” as one of the main pillars of its development aid policy and considers drug control a matter of great importance. It continues to work closely with the Government of Vietnam in efforts to control drugs in collaboration with the UNODC.

4.6 United States of America

U.S. counter-narcotics objectives in Vietnam are aimed at improving cooperation in domestic, cross-border, regional, and international enforcement efforts and assisting Vietnam with expanding the capacity of its domestic counter-narcotics law enforcement agencies. Operational cooperation between Vietnamese and U.S. authorities has improved dramatically in the past two years, in particular between the Ministry of Public Security Counter-Narcotics Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Hanoi Country Office, but further progress is still needed to counter the growing threat of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) using Vietnam as a major transshipment hub for heroin, methamphetamine, and other synthetic drugs produced in the Golden Triangle and destined to consumer markets throughout East Asia and Oceania.

The DEA engages in direct cooperation on specific counter-narcotics cases and with funding from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), engages in capacity-building efforts by supporting Vietnamese government participation at international and regional events and conferences, as well as conducting training activities, technical assistance, and case-based mentoring. INL also provides training, technical assistance, and the support to construct training centres, piers, and other infrastructure to enhance Vietnam's maritime domain awareness and strengthen the capacity of the Vietnam Coast Guard and other maritime agencies to combat transnational crime, including drug trafficking, in its territorial waters and ports of entry. In partnership with the Thai Government, INL also sends approximately 110 Vietnamese law enforcement officials per year to the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Bangkok to receive training on a range of topics.

In addition, in 2017, the DEA launched a four-year, comprehensive capacity building program for the MPS Counter-Narcotics Department that is focused on training a core group of 100 officers in basic, intermediate, and advanced investigations skills. Since 2017, the DEA has conducted eight basic and intermediate training classes as part of this program, and an additional eight intermediate and advanced training courses are scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2020. The DEA also used this comprehensive capacity building program to identify and address skill-specific training deficits. As a result, in the past two years, the DEA conducted two tactical skills courses for narcotics officers for a total of 70 officers, and one clandestine laboratory investigations course for 32 officers. Given the recent resurgence of clandestine drug laboratories in Vietnam, the DEA plans to conduct another clandestine laboratory investigations course in December 2019. The Department of Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance is helping Vietnam's Ministry of Finance implement new accounting and financial reporting objectives as part of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) program. The U.S. Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program supports the comprehensive development of Vietnam's operational capabilities to deter, detect, interdict, investigate, and prosecute illicit transfers of WMD, WMD related items, and conventional arms.

The bulk of EXBS assistance to Vietnam has focused on Interagency Awareness Building, Industry/enterprise outreach and maritime security and law enforcement activities. Vietnam Customs is the dedicated interlocutor for overall strategic trade management assistance and activities must be accordingly through Customs. However, Vietnam Customs is not a ministry-level organization and lacks interagency influence. Vietnam's Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) has also been a significant partner over the past 3 years. EXBS has provided hand-held detection equipment as well as larger scanning equipment to Vietnamese Customs and border guards. EXBS has also provided comprehensive licensing, commodity identification, and enforcement training in two key ports in Vietnam.

EXBS has also provided short term advisory assistance through DHS/CBP which has helped build Vietnam Customs' targeting and risk management capabilities. EXBS will continue its activities for Vietnam to promote full adherence to international best practices for export controls and relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Among previous and ongoing assistance, maritime border enforcement / law enforcement and security assistance is a priority for the U.S. Government. The U.S. Coast Guard is the primary implementer for the aforementioned assistance.

Through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Vietnam has received approximately \$47 million for implementation in 2018 for a targeted program of health systems strengthening and HIV prevention, care, and treatment among key populations including people who inject drugs (PWID), sex workers, and men who have sex with men (MSM). Injecting drug use plays a significant role in driving HIV transmission. Approximately 45% of all HIV infections in Vietnam are directly associated with injecting drug use. The HIV prevalence rates in the country vary by province with some as high as 60% for this key population. The current program focuses on the 11 PEPFAR Surge provinces of the Northern Economic Zone (Hanoi, Hai Phong, Quang Ninh and Thai Nguyen) and Ho Chi Minh City Metro Region (Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong, Dong Nai, Long An, Ba Ria-Vung Tau, Tay Ninh and Tien Giang). As of September 30, 2018, PEPFAR supported 75,294 patients on antiretroviral treatment, out of 128,451 ART patients countrywide. Support included providing performance-based incentives and technical assistance to the HIV outpatient clinics in the 11 PEPFAR surge provinces.

Additionally, through its methadone program, PEPFAR supported over 21,000 patients on methadone maintenance treatment in the 11 surge provinces (out of 52,000 nationwide). Through PEPFAR, the U.S. Government also participates in the development and implementation of Vietnam's National Strategy on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control.

4.7 UNODC

UNODC assistance to Viet Nam is provided through global, regional and national projects:

In the area of illicit trafficking, UNODC has helped enhance national capacities through organization of training courses and provision of equipment to national agencies.

- Under the Border Management Programme (BM), UNODC provided technical supports to help the Government of Viet Nam to build/develop/improve Border Liaison Office (BLO) mechanism through provision of training courses, basic equipment; dissemination of materials; improvement of information and intelligence exchange. Currently, there are 19 BLOs in Viet Nam, including 07 along Viet Nam-Cambodia border, 08 at Viet Nam-Laos border and, 04 at Viet Nam-China border. In coming time, UNODC plans to support Viet Nam to establish 01 more BLO in Gia Lai, where feasibility assessment had been completed, as well as to conduct feasibility assessment to establish more BLOs with Laos, China and a maritime BLO as a pilot location in the region.
- Under the WCO-UNODC Container Control Programme (CCP), UNODC supports the Viet Nam Customs to set up 4 Port Control Units (PCU), including Hai Phong, Vung Tau, Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City. These PCUs would be responsible for detecting, deterring and preventing illicit trafficking while facilitating legal trade. Members of those PCUs received various training including theoretical and practical trainings, advanced training on various subjects as drug and precursors CITES, Wastes, STCs. In addition to those, they also took parts in mentoring courses and study tour to other ports in the region. Successes of these operational PCUs have been reflected by number of seizures of contrabands and drugs including 5.6 tons of KHAT leaves, almost 100kg of cannabis by Hai Phong PCU in 2017 and 115 kg of cocaine by Vung Tau PCU in mid 2018. In the first 6 months of 2019, PCUs in Viet Nam seized more than 12 tons of ivory, almost 19 tons of pangolin scales, 2 containers of timber under CITES II, 12 containers of other contrabands.

In the area of drug demand reduction and health:

Advocacy for voluntary, quality, comprehensive drug dependence treatment and care: Under the UNODC/WHO program on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care, progress of the global programme in Vietnam was also documented through photo materials which aimed at portraying the complex nature of drug use, drug dependence treatment and care and how the global programme can contribute to improve people's lives. Many quality photos were taken to show the positive impacts that the project interventions have on the patients' and their families' lives. These photos were also showcased at the photo exhibition event "Each person counts – Stories of the world drug problem in photographs" at the 62nd session of the Commission of Narcotic Drugs (CND) co-sponsored by the Vietnam Embassy. In addition, for the first time, Vietnamese government sponsored a panellist to attend the CND's side event on "Family and community interventions for youth with drug use disorders".

UNODC Vietnam also successfully hosted the delegation from Laos, headed by the Ministry of Health's Vice Minister on a study visit when they came to learn about the Vietnam experiences with the methadone maintenance therapy (MMT) program which they later want to implement in Laos.

Participation at various national advocacy events to commemorate the Action Month Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on the occasion of the World Drug Day to provide high-ranking government officials, various government agencies responsible for drug prevention and treatment in Vietnam, other stakeholders and the most up-to-date information about the situation of the world drug problems and called for Vietnamese government's support and actions for evidence-based, quality drug prevention, treatment and care in Vietnam.

Revised Law on Drug Prevention and Control: Members of the Drafting Team from the Ministry of Public Security were sensitized on the nature of drug use disorders and drug prevention and treatment standards. The Drafting Team was also provided with various tools and materials on drug dependence treatment and care developed by UNODC and WHO including the International Standards for the Prevention of Drug Use Disorders and Treatment of Drug Use Disorders, the Guidelines on treatment and care for people with drug use disorders in contact with the criminal justice system, just to name a few. These tools and materials will be used as reference materials for the revision and review of the Law on Drug Prevention and Control.

Capacity building and material development: The Facility Survey Tools was revised and made available in Vietnamese which helps to ensure that the Tools is available for use in Vietnam will be clear, correct, easy to understand, and of good quality.

National master trainers received training in several areas including Treatment Family Therapy, Youth Participation, Drug Use Prevention, just to name a few. A pool of qualified national masters trainers was also created, who are now capable of providing further trainings on drug prevention, treatment and care.

5.0 Prioritised identification of needs for external assistance

Advocacy, policy advice and continued technical assistance are needed to help the Vietnamese government pursue political, social and economic reform. Mini-Dublin Group members may consider supporting:

- Law reform:
 - Updating the Drug Control Law and related legal documents;
- Supply reduction:
 - Improvement of law enforcement capacities on interdiction, investigation as well as information/intelligence collection and sharing on drug related cases;
 - Further priority to precursor chemicals control;
 - Attention should be paid to drug manufactures, including dismantling clandestine laboratories as well as handling precursors, which are found at the crime scenes.
 - Data analysis to identify trends in drug trafficking and seizures;
- Demand reduction:
 - Support relevant government counterparts in addressing the newly emerging ATS use and dependence.
 - Support relevant government counterparts in the area of prevention of drug use and drug use disorders.

6.0 Mini-Dublin group assessment of needs

Illicit drug trafficking and other types of transnational organised crime have become more complex, with offenders adopting more organized and sophisticated modus operandi.

The production of synthetic drugs in Vietnam, particularly “ice”, has decreased, but the potential for domestic production remains high.

Heroin is still the dominant drug type in Viet Nam in terms of use and trafficking. The volume of cocaine trafficked into Viet Nam is small but the trafficking of cocaine from South America into Viet Nam showed that criminal syndicates in South America are trying to expand their market into Southeast Asia, including Viet Nam.

7.0 Recommendations

To the Government of Viet Nam:

- Further strengthen inter-agency coordination and cooperation in implementing action plans and activities under its National Drug Control and Crime Prevention strategies;
 - Improve cross-border cooperation activities, including mutual legal assistance, information sharing and cross-border operations;
 - Develop new rules and regulations on the treatment of drug dependent people based on the evidence and respect of human rights;
 - Prioritise implementation of regulation measures to control precursor chemicals.
 - Strengthen data collection and analysis capacity to identify trends in drugs trafficking and seizures.
 - Implement measures to control and address money laundering activities directly tied to large scale drugs crime in Vietnam.
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