

Intervention
by
Representative of Thai Delegates
The Sixth Meeting of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary
Assembly(AIPA) Fact Finding Committee(AIFOCOM) to Combat
the Drug Menace
Le Meridien Chiang Rai Resort, Chiang Rai, Thailand
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Agenda 6 Discussion on Harmonization of Laws on Drug Trafficking:

B: The Chemicals and Precursors Control

Madame Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Due to the rising trend of the smuggling of precursor and essential chemicals for narcotic drug production in the region, especially in countries sharing common borders and in ASEAN countries. From the report on dismantling of refineries in recent years, Myanmar, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Cambodia were used as spots for producing ATS. There are new patterns of precursor and essential chemicals smuggling and new existing national measures for precursor and essential chemical control.

The control of precursor seemed to be one of successful suppression measure for the narcotics law enforcement agencies to cut down drug trade, without those precursors, drug production would not be able to accomplish. In addition to the strengthening of international precursor and essential chemical control regulations such as the lists of controlled substances and Pre-export Notification as stipulated by the 1988 UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, there was an urgent need to enhance cooperation among our ASEAN countries in this area, taking into account the different constraints and capacities of each country, especially when we have to deal with transnational organized crimes.

Thailand would like to emphasize the importance of closer coordination among agencies concerned for effective prevention of diversion of precursor and essential chemicals. Besides,

recommendations on Harmonization of laws or regulations concerned for precursor control which were arisen from this meeting should be forwarded to AIPA forums for consideration.

Madame Chairperson,

In order to efficiently control the diversion of precursors, the Thailand Precursor Control Working Group consists of nine national agencies was established since 1992 to formulate national strategy on precursor control, supervise and implement precursor control activities and integrate the efforts among those concerned agencies.

The precursor can be shifted either to another precursor or to another source. Encouragement to monitor the variety of different precursor is considered a significant measure. The flexibility is required to take account of differences and local drug consumption included alternative precursor and pharmaceutical preparation containing precursor. The efforts should be implemented to detect the domestic diversion and international smuggling.

To give you an example, Thailand has applied the Import and Export Act, 1979 to control the importation and exportation of Caffeine which is abused to be main component of Methamphetamine tablet in this region. Both exporter and importer who want to export and import Caffeine to or from any destination requests to ask the permission from authorized agencies. For this matter, Thailand received good cooperation from Myanmar and China that they acknowledged the need of controlling caffeine while India stated that they need to study more on this matter because the control measure of caffeine in India would affect business line throughout the country. This shows that cooperation on precursor control is needed especially from the chemical producing countries.

Moreover, the Commodities Control Act, 1952 was expanded to control the caffeine throughout the country by controlling the possession quantity, warehouses, and every movement of caffeine from one place to another place have to be reported to the Department of Internal Trade.

Sufficient laws and regulations should support both law enforcement agencies and chemist groups to carry out their tasks. The new laws and regulations need to be developed to suit the present drug situation timely.

For Thailand nowadays, the precursors and essential chemicals are strictly control particularly the twenty-three precursors and essential chemicals listed in the 1988 UN Convention. Additional eight precursors and essential chemicals are also added to put under the control and one substance, caffeine is controlled throughout the country. This includes the precursors and essential chemicals that we agreed to control under the strict control list and watch list that are *ephedrine, pseudo-ephedrine and acetic anhydride* that were placed in the priority control lists and *hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, toluene and acetone* that were placed under the chemical watch lists.

Thailand would like to encourage the utilization of the existing cooperation mechanisms on drug control to conduct substantive cooperation and to provide mutual assistance. Pre-Export Notification (PEN) is an effective measure to prevent diversion of precursor and chemicals.

Thailand has encouraged the chemical and pharmaceutical industry, drug stores as well as transportation sector to play a responsible and pro-active role in preventing of precursor by promoting close cooperation, coordination and sharing of experiences within the industrial and between industrial and competent authorities.

Furthermore, cross border cooperation mechanism was considered to be advantage for countries sharing common borders to develop more effective and efficient coordination. Moreover, the member countries were to encourage other members to build up their own capacity in various areas such as clandestine laboratories investigation, test of precursor and essential chemicals for ATS, equipments relating to the production of illicit drugs and vice versa.

Last but not least, Thailand would suggest the following guidelines to help strengthen the law enforcement work on precursor control as follows;

- setting up mechanisms and channels for communication especially for information exchange;

- compiling guidelines for cross-border law enforcement cooperation on precursor and essential chemical control;
- strengthening the existing border liaison mechanisms and establishing new ones where necessary;
- updating the information on the import, export and diversion of precursor and essential chemicals used in illicit drug production;
- exchanging mutual technical assistance and capacity building such as training programme, including proper management of seized precursor and essential chemicals, aiming at reducing the negative impacts to the environment.
- Enhancing cooperation among government sectors and private sectors as a partnership to prevent the diversion

Thailand wish to share the same destiny with every country in this region to fulfill the achievement of the fight against drugs and would like to commit ourselves to be a key and active supporter in this matter.

Thank you.