

INFORMATION NOTE

Advanced Investigations Training for Cambodia Law Enforcement Bolsters Transnational Crime Fighting in Southeast Asia



Officers interview a 'suspect' during a simulated investigation.

Phnom Den, Takeo Province, Cambodia, 10 October 2012 –

A team of international law-enforcement specialists provided training to 45 Cambodian law enforcement officers over a two-week period in Phnom Den and Trapeang Plong in Cambodia, on the border with Viet Nam. Participants included Border Police, Gendarmerie, Customs and Immigration Department officers, Forestry Administration, and Ministry of Environment. Some of the agencies staff the Border Liaison Office in Cambodia which facilitates greater cooperation with their neighbours.

The training targeted the illegal trafficking of environmental commodities such as ozone-depleting substances (ODS) and hazardous waste, and the illegal trade in endangered wildlife. Also addressed were drug trafficking, smuggling of migrants and human-trafficking – all of which are serious crimes which threaten security in the region.

The course was an initiative of PATROL (Partnership Against Transnational-crime through Regional Law-enforcement) which works on multiple fronts to help governments to fight transnational crime along key areas in Greater Mekong Sub-region. As a result of regional infrastructure and development projects the region is expected to increase opportunities for trade, both legal and an unfortunate proportion of illicit trade.

The two courses, each of which took place over five days, provided officers with input on smuggling methods and trends and how to combat these issues through techniques such as surveillance, controlled deliveries, searching methods and investigative interviewing. Participants engaged in role-playing exercises and extended operational scenarios acted out on the border itself.

An important objective was to encourage agencies to cooperate more effectively with their counterparts in neighbouring countries including Thailand, Viet Nam and Laos and to exchange information and engage in cross-border investigations. Specialised training on intelligence sources and informants was also delivered.

Police Brigadier General Sophally Huot of Cambodia's National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) coordinates activities under the PATROL programme within the country. He commented, "Bringing together officers from so many key agencies working at the border will enhance cooperation both within Cambodia and with our neighbouring countries. The training has provided officers with important new skills which will help to detect and prevent serious organised crime".

To better equip officers with tools to detect illegal trade, UNEP donated a Refrigerant Identifier to be used within Border Liaison Offices. Deputy Director Pak Sokharavuth from the Ministry of Environment, who provided training in use of the new equipment, said: "The provision of this Identifier will enable rapid analysis of suspected ODS being smuggled within the region and will act as a deterrent to those attempting to commit transnational crimes which damage the environment."



Officers receive training on identifying refrigerant chemicals using equipment donated by UNEP.

Project PATROL is a collaboration between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), TRAFFIC and the Freeland Foundation. Enforcement Trainers from the four partner organisations were joined by colleagues from the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Department of Environment.

Justin Gosling, a law enforcement advisor with UNEP said, "This training under the PATROL project helps to provide front-line and strategic-level officers with the support and skills they need to conduct pro-active investigations aimed to reduce crimes which harm people and the environment. The training delivered includes advanced, best-practice methods from the world's leading law enforcement agencies".

Similar training will take place in forthcoming weeks at border locations in Viet Nam and Thailand.

Link to UNODC web-story on the training:

<http://www.unodc.org/eastasiaandpacific/en/cambodia/2012/10/patrol/story.html>

For more information, please contact:

Ms. Kakuko Nagatani-Yoshida, Policy and Enforcement Officer, OzonAction Programme, UNEP Regional Office for Asia and Pacific. Tel: +6622881679; Email: Kakuko.Nagatani@unep.org

Ms. Satwant Kaur, Regional Information Officer, UNEP, Tel: +662 288 2127/02 288 2314; E-mail: satwant.kaur@unep.org

Notes to Editors

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the United Nations system's designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action.

The Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of a number of substances believed to be responsible for ozone depletion. The treaty was opened for signature on September 16, 1987 and entered into force on January 1, 1989. Since then, it has undergone five revisions, in 1990 (London), 1992 (Copenhagen), 1995 (Vienna), 1997 (Montreal), and 1999 (Beijing). Due to its widespread adoption and implementation it has been hailed as an example of exceptional international cooperation "Perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date..."

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal is an international treaty designed to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects of hazardous wastes. Its scope of application covers a wide range of wastes defined as "hazardous wastes" based on their origin and/or composition and their characteristics, as well as two types of wastes defined as "other wastes" - household waste and incinerator ash. The Convention was adopted on 22 March 1989 by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries in Basel, Switzerland, in response to a public outcry following the discovery, in the 1980s, in Africa and other parts of the developing world of deposits of toxic wastes imported from abroad.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the United Nations system's designated entity for fighting against illicit drugs and international crime. Established in 1997 through a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention, UNODC operates in all regions of the world through an extensive network of field offices. This UN agency is mandated to assist Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism. In the Millennium Declaration, Member States also resolved to intensify efforts to fight transnational crime in all its dimensions, to redouble the efforts to implement the commitment to counter the world drug problem and to take concerted action against international terrorism.

Partnership Against Transnational-crime through Regional Organized Law-enforcement (PATROL) was established in 2010 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific and its partners to improve border security at land borders, sea ports and airports in China and the ASEAN countries of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam). PATROL's objectives include; establishing border liaison offices (BLOs) in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam and training BLO staff, port control and airport specialist response units to fight cross-border crimes related to illegal migration, particularly the trafficking in human beings, wildlife, illicit drugs and materials dangerous to the environment. Partner PATROL organizations are the UNODC Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, FREELAND Foundation and TRAFFIC. PATROL is funded by the Governments of Australia, the United States, Sweden and Norway.