

Mr. Olivier Lermet's Speech for Handover of BLO Equipment

Office of National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD), Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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In the coming decade, export-driven growth and major regional infrastructure upgrades in Southeast Asia will concentrate resources along key zones of movement – the so called “development corridors”. Our region is arguably one of the world’s top source, transit and destination areas for drugs, human trafficking and environmental crimes. For this reason, the effort to curtail and stop trafficking will remain at the top of UNODC’s agenda in the region.

For the past 10 years, the BLO mechanism has played a key role in strengthening cross-border cooperation in Southeast Asia and established Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) at a number of border crossing points. The concept behind the creation of the BLOs was to reverse traditional attitudes and encourage cooperation between law enforcement units working at the borders thereby maximizing the value of jointly held information.

Under this system of cooperation, each country provided the premises and staff for the BLOs while the project contributed training and sufficient basic equipment to support the operation of the office. Communications equipment has been installed at the BLO offices which permit UNODC-developed law enforcement computer-based training (CBT) to take place. Training in basic search and interview techniques is available to BLO staff and other enforcement personnel working on their respective borders. The results following the training have been immediately apparent as the officers became aware of methods of identifying suspicious trafficking activity. The creation of the BLOs has resulted in an exchange of information that continues to lead to numerous arrests and seizures. National and regional meetings also contribute to creating an atmosphere of cooperation.

In this regard, National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) cooperates with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to fight against transnational organized crimes by using the BLO mechanism and have established BLO in Preah Vihear province to reverse traditional attitudes and encourage cooperation between law enforcement units working at the borders between Cambodia and Lao PDR thereby maximizing the value of jointly held information. BLO Preah Vihear will play an essential and expanded role in the future as part of a sustained regional response to illicit trafficking of any sort.

Therefore today, UNODC would like to handover the vehicles, communication devices, computers for administrative work and Computer-based Trainings, electronic devices as well as furniture to be used in BLO Preah Vihear through the cooperation of NACD. These equipment will help encouraging cooperation along and across national borders to enable direct communication of real time information sharing leading to drug seizures and the capture of traffickers and to foster cooperation between different national border law enforcement agency units working at the borders for improved multilateral law enforcement.