

MEDIA ADVISORY

UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov begins 12-day visit to South-East Asia

Bangkok, 28 November 2012 – Mr. Yury Fedotov, the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), today starts his first official visit to South-East Asia.

During the 12-day, five-country mission, Mr. Fedotov will meet with national and regional leaders and key government, UN and NGO partners in **Thailand, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Lao People's Democratic Republic** and **Indonesia**. He will hold strategic dialogue with them and beneficiaries of UNODC's work.

Mr. Fedotov will review key UNODC achievements in the region as well as areas where the organization's work can be improved..

"East Asia and the Pacific is home to some of the world's fastest-growing economies and just under 30 per cent of its population. While economic growth and regional integration bring many positives such as the increased mobility of goods, services, people and money, they also provide opportunities for transnational organized crime to expand and threaten human security," said Mr. Fedotov.

Mr. Fedotov plans to discuss and engage with stakeholders on a broad range of human security threats including illicit drugs, transnational organized crime, anti-corruption, environmental crimes including the illegal trade in timber and protected wildlife, and human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

"Human security is threatened wherever organized criminal groups emerge to challenge the rule of law. These transnational organized criminal syndicates – who trade in illicit drugs, human beings, counterfeit products, fake medicines, protected natural resources like timber, fish and other wildlife, and goods that harm the environment – are a threat to public health and society's well-being. We need to put them out of business!" said Mr. Fedotov.

In Thailand, Mr. Fedotov meets Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Dr. Surapong Tovichakchaikul as well as the Minister of Justice, Attorney-General and Police Commissioner General. Bangkok was the country where UNODC opened its first field office back in 1971.

While in Myanmar, Mr. Fedotov is expected to meet both Vice-President H.E. Dr. Sai Mauk Kham and Nobel Prize winner and parliamentarian Daw Aung San Suu Kyi before visiting UNODC field offices in Shan State. Key Myanmar issues include illicit drugs such as opium and amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), transnational organized crime, anti-corruption, the burgeoning peace process in Shan State, and funding for alternative development projects to provide infrastructure, jobs and markets as a counter to drug production.

Mr. Fedotov will then visit Viet Nam, where he will meet with H.E. Mr. Nguyen Huan Phuc, Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam before going on to neighboring Lao PDR to meet with H.E. Mr Thongsing Thammavong, Prime Minister of the Lao People's

Democratic Republic, other senior government leaders and visit a shelter for women and children victims of human trafficking – as well as domestic violence and sexual exploitation.

Mr. Fedotov will conclude his South-East Asia visit in Indonesia, home to the largest single UNODC country programme in the region, and a critical regional hub. The UNODC programme in Indonesia focuses on providing critical support to anti-corruption efforts by the Supreme Court, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), the criminal justice system, law enforcement and civil society to better combat emerging threats such forest and wildlife crimes, rising greenhouse gases caused by deforestation, and illicit drugs.

“UNODC will continue to assist the Government and people of Indonesia to fight illicit drugs, corruption and transnational organized crime, particularly with regard to environmental crime,” said Mr. Fedotov.

For further information, please contact:

John Bleho, Media and Communications Consultant, john.bleho@unodc.org

UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific

T: (+66) 2288.2091 | M: (+66) 81.750.0539