

Let us join hands more intensely than what was agreed
First Meeting of the ACCORD Plan of Action Task Forces

Bali 12-14 November 2001

His Excellency Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security
Executive Director, National Narcotics Coordinating Board of Indonesia
The Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN
Your Excellencies, the Head of Delegations
Distinguished Delegates,
Colleagues and Friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

On behalf of the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, let me express my most sincere thanks to the Government of Indonesia and to the ASEAN Secretariat for co-hosting the First Meeting of the ASEAN and China ACCORD Plan of Action Task Forces in Bali this year.

In October 2000 in Bangkok, we jointly decided to meet again after one year to re-assess our journey towards a better co-operation against the scourge of drugs. At that time, nobody could have imagined how deeply the world would have changed. But two months ago, the world did change profoundly. Our vision should therefore be one of joining hands more intensely than agreed. We must unite to take forceful action against all the evil-doers and organized criminals who plan acts of terrorism, who traffic and enslave people, who traffic drugs and launder their money in the midst of our law abiding and hard working communities.

I am confident that this meeting will significantly advance our regional cooperation in the fight against drugs and in the reinforcement of our commitment to work together towards the achievement of the goals that have already been established with clarity and precision.

One year ago, together with representatives of 36 countries and 16 international organizations, we all endorsed the ACCORD Plan of Action. By doing so we have recognized that drugs are increasingly threatening the priorities of all peoples and governments, the Asian values and traditions, the youth's health and the civil society's peace and economic development. Drugs are smoked, snorted, chased, injected, inhaled and ingested everywhere, at anytime, and by an increasing number of different groups of people. Experience has demonstrated that some countries may be affected earlier or later than other, but no community is immune.

Asia is the world's primary producer of heroin and, according to the most recent seizures, the region also stands for the world's largest production and abuse of ATS.

With the ACCORD, we all agreed to prioritize actions against drug production, trafficking and abuse - in particular new drugs such as ATS - and to commit our skills, time and resources to this end. We went further by stating that the fight against drugs would be doomed to fail, without a serious commitment to cooperate at the regional level, to exchange information and resources, to network effectively and to build coalitions.

It is all about regional cooperation, information sharing, and operational partnerships: these are all essential aspects, which need to become an integral and natural component of our collective response to the drug problem, a collective response not only of governments but also of civil societies and NGOs.

Innovation has always been a primary challenge of leadership but also a notable component of

many successes. While the mentioned aspects are not new per se, the novelty lies in the recognition that when something seems difficult to achieve with one single approach, the time is ripe to change that approach. The fragmentation and the lack of coordination of clear targets and methods have often restricted our view and our capacity to imagine a broader horizon.

We are currently here to discuss the beginning of the execution of our plans and to honestly assess our actions and judge how much they match our goals and expectations.

Among the 36 countries that have endorsed the ACCORD Plan of Action, all five permanent members of UN Security Council are on board. The United Nations Commission on Narcotics Drugs, last March has unanimously approved a resolution strongly supporting the ACCORD process and calling for its implementation as soon as possible. The capacity to lead and facilitate its execution and to provide support to the process and to the stakeholders is now expected from all ASEAN countries. The US, China, Japan, the European Union being the world's largest economies and, together, representing a large part of the world's population, have an essential role to play in providing human and financial resources. In the Beijing Declaration of September 2001, the countries of the Golden Triangle and China, have reaffirmed the need for a serious, common and shared regional response to the drug problem.

It is only through unity in diversity that we will be able to make a real and tangible impact. Unity in the process and in the goal. Diversity of actors, capacities and resources.

In this respect, this meeting represents a unique opportunity to start building the new blocks of a common action against this global threat to sustainable development, justice and security. I am therefore convinced that we will make the best and most constructive results out of this precious opportunity.

At this meeting the future of the peoples of more than one fourth of the world is at stake. Our decisions and resulting action will also affect all the rest of the world.

We know that we are able to make a difference in the region in this difficult moment of the world.

Thank you.