

28 October 2015

English only*

Report of the Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 19 to 22 October 2015

I. Matters calling for action by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs or brought to its attention

Recommendations adopted by the Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific

1. Participants in the Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific:

(a) Recalled the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/182, in which Member States decided, among other things, that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its fifty-seventh session, in 2014, should conduct a high-level review of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and its Plan of Action; recommended that the Economic and Social Council should devote a high-level segment to a theme related to the world drug problem; and also recommended that the General Assembly should hold a special session to address the world drug problem;

(b) Also recalled General Assembly resolution 67/193, in which the Assembly decided to convene, in early 2016, a special session on the world drug problem to review the progress in the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, including an assessment of the achievements and challenges in countering the world drug problem, within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments;

(c) Took note with appreciation of the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action,

* Available only in English, which is the working language of the subsidiary body.



adopted by the Commission at its fifty-seventh session, in which achievements, challenges and priorities for action within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments were identified;

(d) Welcomed the decision made by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/200 that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should lead the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016, by addressing all organizational and substantive matters in an open-ended manner;

(e) Also welcomed in that regard the adoption by the Commission of its resolutions 57/5 and 58/8 on the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016, in which the Commission, *inter alia*, decided to take all possible measures to ensure an adequate, inclusive and effective preparatory process, with the active participation of all relevant stakeholders;

(f) Resolved to continue to support and contribute to the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly to be held in 2016, in view of the request made by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in its resolution 56/10, to the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission to contribute to the monitoring of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action at the regional level by discussing regional views on progress made in that regard;

(g) Submitted the following regional recommendations of the working groups aimed at moving forward in the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action.

Issue 1. Current trends in the manufacture, trafficking and consumption of amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances

2. The following recommendations were made with regard to current trends in the manufacture, trafficking and consumption of amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances:

(a) Governments should be encouraged to develop national prevention strategies against amphetamine-type stimulants that aim to reduce demand, strengthen social policies and deliver targeted interventions that support vulnerable and at-risk individuals;

(b) With a view to encouraging the coordination of operational responses in combating the cross-border trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants, Governments are urged to support their drug enforcement authorities and cooperate in the timely exchange of actionable information that will lead to effective interventions against syndicates and their operatives;

(c) Governments should support the establishment of inter-agency task forces that bring together the specialist skills of their interdiction agencies, organized crime investigators, forensic accounting experts and prosecutors, in response to the dynamic strategies adopted by trafficking syndicates and in order to be better prepared to dismantle and prosecute the transnational organizations that are involved in trafficking amphetamine-type stimulants across the region.

Issue 2. Successful solutions and practices in the area of forensics

3. The following recommendations were made with regard to successful solutions and practices in the area of forensics:

(a) Governments are encouraged to invest in their forensic laboratories, including the training of staff involved in the identification, collection and securing of forensic evidence, and ensure that their country's legislation adequately supports the valuable contribution that forensics services provide to drug law enforcement and the handling of related offences;

(b) Governments should support regional cooperation in the forensic science sector as a means of enhancing the professional knowledge and skills of forensic practitioners, promoting the sharing of good practices and facilitating the exchange of information, such as drug profiling data, for drug law enforcement purposes;

(c) Governments should facilitate the availability of reference standards for new psychoactive substances for use by their forensic science laboratories to aid in the detection and identification of these substances.

Issue 3. Harmonization of legislation and practices at the international level

4. The following recommendations were made with regard to harmonization of legislation and practices at the international level:

(a) Governments should take steps to review their procedures upon receipt of formal requests for mutual legal assistance from the drug enforcement authorities of other countries in order to ensure a timely response with minimal delays that might otherwise jeopardize an active investigation;

(b) Participating Governments are encouraged to use the Safe Mekong Initiative as a platform for strengthening closer operational collaboration;

(c) Governments are encouraged to actively support the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Asia and the Pacific in the investigation, tracking and tracing efforts to launder the proceeds of drug trafficking.

II. Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures

5. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 19 October 2015, the Meeting considered item 3 of its agenda, entitled "Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures". For its consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it a report of the Secretariat on statistical analysis of drug trafficking trends in East, South-East and South Asia, in Oceania and worldwide (UNODC/HONLAP/39/2) and a note by the Secretariat on regional and subregional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific (UNODC/HONLAP/39/3). In addition, country reports were submitted by Afghanistan, Armenia, Brunei Darussalam, China (including Hong Kong, China, and Macao, China), France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Turkey and Viet Nam (UNODC/HONLAP/39/CRP.1-17, respectively).

6. Representatives of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) introduced the item and made audiovisual presentations, providing an overview of trends in illicit drug production and trafficking in the region and worldwide and of the global Synthetics Monitoring: Analysis, Reporting and Trends (SMART) programme in East Asia, border management and the Global Container Control Programme. The representatives of Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and Thailand made statements. The representatives of Japan and Thailand also made audiovisual presentations.
7. The methodology used for profiling containers for the purpose of detecting illicit drug trafficking, its positive contribution in supporting international trade and the role of the World Customs Organization and UNODC in assisting Member States in this area were discussed.
8. It was noted that the world drug situation continued to be a shared concern for States and that, despite efforts undertaken by the international community, the scale of the illicit production, manufacture, trade and consumption of drugs remained significant. Reference was made to the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016, and to the linkages to social development in general, and to the right to development in particular, in the context of addressing the world drug problem. Linkages between drug trafficking, terrorism, money-laundering, piracy and other related crimes were also mentioned. One speaker emphasized that alternative development had to be pursued in order for drug production to be addressed. One speaker expressed concern about the idea of the legalization of drugs and noted that an efficient way of addressing the drug problem was to gain an in-depth understanding of its causes and various aspects. Another speaker expressed his country's strong support for that statement and said that drugs must not be legalized.
9. The importance of the Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, as a key multilateral platform for cooperation in combating drugs in the region, was highlighted, as was the importance of law enforcement cooperation, including through sharing information and intelligence, and of joint operations, with neighbouring countries and in the region as a whole. The establishment of joint task forces at the national level was also discussed. Reference was made to a number of other drug regional enforcement meetings, such as the Asia-Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference.
10. Support was expressed for the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, and the need to develop successful strategies in the region was stressed. One speaker informed the Meeting of her country's efforts to implement the recommendations adopted by the Thirty-seventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific.
11. A number of speakers informed the Meeting of drug trafficking and production trends, as well as seizures and arrests made in their respective countries. The involvement of African and Latin American drug syndicates in drug trafficking in the Asia-Pacific region was noted.
12. Appreciation was expressed for support provided by UNODC to States in facilitating the exchange of information on drug trafficking in the region. Furthermore, support was expressed for the global SMART programme.

III. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirty-seventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific

13. At its 2nd meeting, on 19 October 2015, the Meeting considered item 4 of its agenda, entitled “Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirty-seventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific”.

14. The Thirty-seventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 21 to 24 October 2013, had adopted a set of recommendations, following the consideration of topics by working groups at that meeting. A questionnaire on the implementation of the recommendations had been dispatched to Governments on 1 July 2015 for responses by 25 August 2015.

15. The Meeting had before it a report of the Secretariat prepared on the basis of information provided by Governments in response to the questionnaire sent to all States members of the Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific (UNODC/HONLAP/39/4). The report reflected the replies received by 22 September 2015 from Afghanistan, Armenia, Brunei Darussalam, China (including Hong Kong, China, and Macao, China), France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Russian Federation and Turkey.

16. Shortly before the Meeting, completed questionnaires had also been received from the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Viet Nam.

17. The Secretary introduced the item and highlighted the issues related to the implementation of recommendations from the report.

IV. Consideration of topics by working groups

18. At its 3rd to 6th meetings, on 20 and 21 October 2015, the Meeting established working groups to examine the three issues under item 5 of its agenda, entitled “Consideration of topics by working groups”. The observations made by the working groups and the conclusions reached after consideration of the issues are presented below. The recommendations made by the working groups and adopted by the Meeting are presented in section I above.

Issue 1. Current trends in the manufacture, trafficking and consumption of amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances

19. The working group on issue 1 met during the 3rd and 4th meetings, held on 20 October 2015. In its consideration of the issue, the working group made the following observations:

(a) The manufacture, trafficking and seizure of amphetamine-type stimulants are on the rise across the region;

(b) By undertaking forensic chemical analyses of seized methamphetamine, authorities can use the information from the analyses to identify common

production sites and links between trafficking organizations, and dismantle distribution networks;

(c) Effective border management for the purpose of intercepting amphetamine-type stimulants, which are trafficked by well-organized international syndicates operating into and across the region, presents a serious challenge to authorities;

(d) The role of organized crime syndicates from other regions, notably West Africa and, to a lesser extent, North America, and the global networks of Asian organized crime groups has become more relevant in the context of methamphetamine trafficking into the Asia-Pacific region;

(e) There is a need for more frequent, coordinated and actionable information exchange between the region's drug enforcement authorities in order to combat the cross-border trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants.

20. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) An improved understanding of the dynamics of the markets for amphetamine-type stimulants and the factors that drive demand and make these substances attractive to young consumers would assist authorities in the design of more effective and well-targeted national strategies to reduce both demand and supply;

(b) Better exchange of information about the manufacture, trafficking and distribution of amphetamine-type stimulants between authorities both domestically and across borders would enhance the application of effective drug enforcement countermeasures;

(c) The border liaison offices and Safe Mekong initiatives offer the law enforcement authorities in the region valuable and complementary platforms to exchange information and coordinate operational responses against groups trafficking amphetamine-type stimulants.

Issue 2. Successful solutions and practices in the area of forensics

21. The working group on issue 2 met during the 4th, 5th and 6th meetings, held on 20 and 21 October 2015. During its consideration of the issue, the working group made the following observations:

(a) Evidence links suspects to crimes, enables the reconstruction of events and gives a direction to investigations;

(b) Forensic science supports the implementation of drug law enforcement legislation through the application of scientific knowledge and technology to the evidence obtained in the investigation of these offences;

(c) Forensic science provides credible evidence that is acceptable to courts of law and that connects individuals and their involvement to crime scenes and related drug trafficking offences;

(d) There are different levels of development and expertise in forensic science capacities in countries across the region.

22. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) The involvement of forensic science in examining evidence from illicit drug trafficking and related offences has become an integral part of investigations and securing successful prosecutions;

(b) The adoption of a standardized forensic approach to examining and recording evidence of drug trafficking through the international mail and fast courier services enables authorities to establish valuable databases for future interrogation and may establish links between seemingly unconnected interceptions and offences;

(c) The differences in funding, resources and development among forensic services in the region, together with the different levels of knowledge about the application of good forensic evidence-gathering, offer great opportunities for regional and international cooperation to develop uniformly applied high standards;

(d) It is important that staff trained in forensic support understand what they are there to accomplish and why and where potential evidence at a drug crime scene may await recovery in a legally admissible way, through their professional interventions.

Issue 3. Harmonization of legislation and practices at the international level

23. The working group on issue 3 met during the 6th meeting, held on 21 October 2015. During its consideration of the issue, the working group made the following observations:

(a) The slow pace of processing official communication requests from other countries' authorities for mutual legal assistance in the investigation of drug trafficking offences can impede the successful prosecution of those being investigated;

(b) The identification of national focal points and the placement of liaison officers has proven to be an effective way to facilitate collaboration in investigations at the regional level;

(c) The signing of memorandums of understanding among countries has resulted in faster responses to assistance requests from counterpart agencies;

(d) Several countries are not fully informed about all the international collaboration efforts that are currently in place and available to support cooperation among the States of the region;

(e) The Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Asia and the Pacific offers an opportunity for informal collaboration between practitioners from many jurisdictions and international organizations to recover criminal assets.

24. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) The international cooperation arrangements operating across the region, such as the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control in the Greater Mekong Subregion, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the border liaison offices initiative and the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Asia and the Pacific, offer valuable practical support to efforts to cooperate to investigate and dismantle drug trafficking syndicates;

(b) More effort is needed to promote knowledge about cooperation agreements within the region and the support they can offer to drug law enforcement authorities in their investigation of drug trafficking and the syndicates involved;

(c) The goal of expanding the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Asia and the Pacific to include Central Asia, Pacific Island countries and the region's financial hubs will add significantly to the importance of this platform as a vehicle to overcome legislative differences, language barriers and any communication issues that may arise in the recovery of illicit assets derived from trafficking.

V. Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016

25. At its 2nd meeting, on 19 October 2015, the Meeting considered item 6 of its agenda, entitled "Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016". For its consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it the Political Declaration and Plan of Action and the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem.

26. The Meeting viewed a video statement by the Chair of the board tasked by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs with the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016. The Secretary of the Meeting introduced the item. She highlighted the measures contained in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action which stressed the need for international cooperation in countering the world drug problem, in recognition of the fact that it remained a common and shared responsibility that required an integrated, multidisciplinary, and balanced approach to supply and demand reduction. The Secretary informed the meeting that, at its fifty-seventh session, in March 2014, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had conducted a high-level review of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action and adopted a Joint Ministerial Statement in which achievements, challenges and priorities for further action, in the framework of the international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments, were identified. Furthermore, reference was made to the adoption by the Commission of resolution 58/8, as well as to the recommendation made by the Commission to the Economic and Social Council to approve a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly defining the modalities for the special session of the Assembly on the world drug problem, which would be held in April 2016.

27. The representative of Japan made a statement. He noted that his Government had submitted a contribution to the draft outcome document of the special session, with a particular focus on the relationship between the treatment and punishment of drug abusers.

VI. Organization of the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific

28. At its 7th meeting, on 22 October 2015, the Meeting considered agenda item 7, entitled “Organization of the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific”. For its consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it the note by the Secretariat on the organization of the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific (UNODC/HONLAP/39/5).

29. The representatives of China, India, Japan and New Zealand made statements.

30. It was proposed that the Meeting should consider, for discussion by future working groups, topics such as trends in the trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances, best practices in drug demand reduction, and efforts to counter drug-related money-laundering.

31. The Chair instructed the Secretariat to formulate those topics into themes for consideration by working groups on the basis of the priorities in the region and in consultation with States represented at meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, as required.

32. No offer to host the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, was made at the Thirty-ninth Meeting. The Secretariat would be in contact with the Bureau and interested Member States with a view to identifying a host for the Fortieth Meeting.

33. The Meeting approved the following provisional agenda for the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures.
4. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirty-eighth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific.
5. Consideration of topics by working groups: [*to be determined*].
6. Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem.
7. Organization of the Forty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report of the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific.

VII. Other business

34. At its 7th meeting, on 22 October, the Meeting considered agenda item 8, entitled “Other business”. No issues were raised under the agenda item.

VIII. Adoption of the report

35. At its 7th meeting, on 22 October 2015, the Meeting considered item 9 of its agenda and adopted the report of the Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific (UNODC/HONLAP/39/L.1 and Add.1-6), including the reports of the working groups and the recommendations contained therein.

IX. Organization of the Meeting

A. Opening and duration of the Meeting

36. The Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, was held in Bangkok from 19 to 22 October 2015. The representative of the Executive Director of UNODC opened the Meeting. The Minister of Justice of Thailand made a statement.

B. Attendance

37. The following States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific were represented: Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

38. Hong Kong, China, and Macao, China, as associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, were represented.

39. Italy and Mexico were represented by observers.

40. The International Organization for Migration and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) were also represented by observers.

41. UNODC served as the secretariat of the Meeting.

C. Election of officers

42. At its 1st meeting, on 19 October 2015, the Meeting elected the following officers by acclamation:

<i>Chair:</i>	Fumihiko Abe (Japan)
<i>First Vice-Chair:</i>	Lukas Aket (Malaysia)
<i>Second Vice-Chair:</i>	Pengiran Saiful Rizal (Brunei Darussalam)
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Brian Lamb (New Zealand)

D. Adoption of the agenda

43. At the same meeting, the Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures.
4. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirty-seventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific.
5. Consideration of topics by working groups:
 - (a) Current trends in the manufacture, trafficking and consumption of amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances;
 - (b) Successful solutions and practices in the area of forensics;
 - (c) Harmonization of legislation and practices at the international level.
6. Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016.
7. Organization of the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report of the Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific.

E. Documentation

44. The documents before the Meeting are listed in the annex to the present report.

F. Closure of the Meeting

45. Closing remarks were made by the Chair of the Meeting.

Annex

List of documents before the Thirty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific

<i>Document number</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Title or description</i>
UNODC/HONLAP/39/1	2	Provisional agenda and annotations
UNODC/HONLAP/39/2	3	Report of the Secretariat on statistical analysis of drug trafficking trends in East, South-East and South Asia, Oceania and worldwide
UNODC/HONLAP/39/3	3	Note by the Secretariat on regional and subregional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific
UNODC/HONLAP/39/4	4	Note by the Secretariat on the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirty-seventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific
UNODC/HONLAP/39/5	7	Note by the Secretariat on the organization of the Fortieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific
UNODC/HONLAP/39/L.1 and Add.1-6	9	Draft reports
UNODC/HONLAP/39/CRP.1-17	3	Country reports
UNODC/HONLAP/39/CRP.18	5 (a)	List of “designated substances”, submitted by Japan