



MEDIA ADVISORY

MEKONG GOVERNMENTS AND PARTNERS REVIEW ROADMAP FOR ACTION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

5 May 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The six Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Governments (Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam) will meet in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 10-12 May, 2006 to review and update the three year plan of action of joint activities to realize their vision of a trafficking-free Mekong region.

The crime of human trafficking continues to prevail in the region. Since the signing of the historic COMMIT Memorandum of Understanding in Yangon, Myanmar in October 2004, by Ministers of the six countries, the Governments have been active in laying the foundation for a network of cooperation to stop traffickers and prosecute them, protect victims of trafficking and assist them return safely home, and launch efforts to prevent others from sharing the same fate.

This high level gathering is a critical step forward that demonstrates the will and determination of the GMS governments to join together to put political commitments made in the COMMIT agreement into concrete action. The COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action focuses on the areas of law enforcement and criminal justice, and prevention, protection, recovery and reintegration of victims and set the standard for anti-trafficking work in the Asian region. The Plan itself is a practical roadmap for priority action, and is buttressed by the technical expertise and support of UN agencies, international and national NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral donors. Over thirty senior government officials will attend in order to review and assess the course of cooperation on trafficking in the Mekong region for the next decade and more.

Major donors have already committed to support the implementation of these activities. The Government of Norway has pledged approximately US \$1 million and the SEARCH Project (a CIDA-supported regional project) has committed approximately US \$ 800,000.

The Secretariat for the COMMIT Process is the UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the GMS (UNIAP). The COMMIT initiative since its inception is being funded by the Government of Norway, SEARCH (a CIDA-supported project), ADB, AUSAID, NZAID, SIDA, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, Save the Children UK, World Vision International and International Organization for Migration (IOM).

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Between May 9-12

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