



**SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE  
PEHIN DATO ADANAN YUSOF  
MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS  
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

**AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF  
17<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF NON-GOVERNMENT  
ORGANISATIONS FOR THE PREVENTIVE OF DRUG AND SUSTANCE ABUSE  
(IFNGO)  
ASEAN NGOs WORKSHOP**

**THE RIZQUN INTERNATIONAL HOTEL**

**AT 9.00 AM  
3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2007**

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Alameen Wassalaatu Wassalaamu 'Ala Asyrafil Ambiaie Walmursaleen, Saidina

Muhammadin Wa' alaa Aalihiee Wasahbihee Ajama'een

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

Good Morning

Yang Mulia

Datin Hajah Masni binti Haji Mohd Ali  
Chairperson of the Organising Committee and President of BASMIDA

Ms Patricia Yoon-Moi Chia  
Secretary-General, The Colombo Plan

Arch Nuno M.R.Jorge  
President of International Federation of Non-Government Organisations for the Prevention of The  
Organisation of Families of Asia and the Pacific (OFAP)

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am honored to be invited to address and declare open this distinguished gathering of Non-Government Organizations. The honor is even greater and a privilege for Brunei Darussalam for hosting this '17<sup>th</sup> International Federation of Non-Government Organizations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse, ASEAN NGOs Workshop' organized by BASMIDA. May I also have the pleasure to extend my warm welcome to distinguished participants and delegates to our country and wish all of you an enjoyable and memorable stay in Brunei Darussalam.
2. We are aware that no country is spared from the drug abuse problem. It has proven to be one of the greatest challenges facing mankind. It affects not only the individual but also the family, the nation and the whole society. The drug menace has proven itself, to this day, as capable of undermining national stability, security and resilience. Apart from human suffering, family disruptions and health implications such as HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C, there is also incalculable economic burden imposed on national economy and society in term of loss of manpower and productivity at the workplace, causes of drug-related crimes and accidents and expenses for treatments and rehabilitation services
3. There is no simple formula to solve the problem of drug abuse and it continues to defy various efforts and programs to control it. However this requires sustained and long term holistic solutions and approach involving not only government agencies, inter-governmental agencies, international communities, regional bodies but also the families, social institutions, NGOs where concerted, collective and united efforts is vital to combat the drug menace.
4. I highly appreciate the efforts of the community and voluntary initiatives such as 'International Federation of Non-Government Organizations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO)' to complement and reinforce government organization as an effective means to fight and prevent drug abuse with the spirit of partnership between Non-Government Organization (NGO) and Government Organization to work closely together at the national, regional and international level.
5. I believe holding these annual IFNGO ASEAN Workshops in ASEAN has not only highlighted the role of anti-drug NGOs in collaborative alliances with Government Organizations in developing, implementing, monitoring and assessing drug abuse prevention and control programs in the demand reduction strategy, but also contribute to the development of our social and community consciousness.
6. I am pleased to see the presence of the distinguished representatives and experts from the ASEAN NGOs and also from the United States of America, The Colombo Plan, Macau, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Hong Kong and UN office on Drug Crime. This shows our collective concern, sheer commitment and dedication to combat drug menace together.
7. I am particularly pleased to note that many young people and students from Brunei Darussalam are participating in the Youth Forum, discussing the theme of the 2007 United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, entitled 'Do Drugs Control Your Life? Your Life, Your Community, No Place for Drugs'. Your presence clearly demonstrates the recognition of the seriousness of the drug abuse problem, its effects on this target and vulnerable group – the youth and their future, a matter which is very close to their hearts. We want more involvement from the youth on proposals of life-skills enhancement, of healthy alternative lifestyles, usage of positive peer pressure and sustainable proposals.
8. We cannot wholly change the effects of globalization but we can immunize our young generation by spiritual and moral values, educate and equip them with knowledge on relevant life skills so

that they will not be exploited in abusing and trafficking narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

9. The community and the families both represent the last frontiers in safeguarding our survival as social and human beings. To this extent they need to be strengthened further by re-orienting and re-educating them to their changing roles and functions in conformity with the changing demands of our society. Strong religious and moral values, enhanced by a sound family background could ensure freedom from drug abuse for the youth of tomorrow. You have to identify strategies on how well religion and parents could be best used to fight drug abuse among our adolescents.

Ladies and Gentlemen

10. The theme of this workshop 'Overcome the incidence of recidivism to ensure DRUG-FREE ASEAN 2015' is appropriate and timely as recidivism is a concern to all of us and must receive a high priority amongst the treatment and rehabilitation professionals and relevant agencies. The burden caused by former addicts going into relapses falls not only on the family but also on the community. The root causes of relapse, its prevention and aftercare needs must be re-assessed as these are necessary for the success of any program or modalities.
11. It is often said that offering a holistic approach which advocates spiritual, psychological, emotional and economic needs to former drug dependents in a caring society and culture can help to reduce recidivism. Having said that, spirituality should be an integral component for any treatment program as this is an instrument to develop resilience and personal competency for those recovering.
12. To all participants and experts at this Workshop, I am confident your invaluable experiences and broad knowledge in the discussions on reviewing, identifying and formulating common solutions, will be useful in future endeavors in reducing relapses and towards the extent of eliminating relapses as well as preventing drug abuse.
13. ASEAN Countries have declared the ultimate goal of 'ASEAN Drug-Free by 2015'. The noble objective requires an integrated approach from all sectors of the government and the community. Government organizations, social institutions, NGOs, families and religious organizations should work together in order to achieve this goal through team work, networking, cooperation within the country itself and amongst members of ASEAN countries as well as relevant international agencies and organizations.
14. With regards to achieving 'Drug-Free ASEAN 2015', at the recent 6<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) on 5-8 November 2007 held in Brunei Darussalam, it was agreed that in achieving Drug-Free ASEAN 2015 within the broader ASEAN community, cross sectoral linkages among existing regional and extra regional mechanisms need to be further strengthened and coordinated. Specific areas where this should be done include strengthening regional framework, mainstreaming drug concerns in other relevant ASEAN bodies, and supporting and sustaining alternative development efforts.
15. I appreciate and applaud NGO's continuous efforts in combating the drug menace and successfully organizing this very significant and important event here in Brunei Darussalam. At this juncture, I would also like to thank and congratulate BASMIDA for successfully organizing this workshop as well as for their dedicated diligence and sincere volunteerism for the benefits of our youth and community. We in the Government will continue to support NGOs, whose laudable efforts are seen as complementing and supplementing those of the Government.

16. Finally, I would like to wish all of you a productive workshop and hope you will find time to interact positively with one another, sharing valuable experiences and of course, not forgetting to experience what Brunei Darussalam has to offer before your departure.
  
17. With the kalimah 'Bismillah Hirrahman Nirrahim, Wassalamu Ala Sayiddina Muhamaddin, Waala Alihi Wasahbihi Ajma'en', it is my great pleasure to declare the '17<sup>th</sup> International Federation of Non-Government Organizations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse, ASEAN NGOs Workshop' open.

Thank you.

Wabillahitaufiq Walhidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.