

Jar of Royal Wisdom on Alternative Development

By **International Organization and Multilateral Cooperation**

Office of the Narcotics Control Board of Thailand

The Jar of Royal Wisdom on Alternative Development was specially designed and created in response to the request of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on the occasion of the opening of its new office in Bogota, Colombia in 2006.

UNODC requested United Nations member states to donate a piece of art to decorate departments of the building to show the diversity of cultures and art as well as the strong consensus and cooperation of the international community in supporting the goals of the United Nations.

To achieve an architectural demonstration of the various joint efforts to curb illicit drugs and organized crimes, a decoration of each department would be dedicated to world-famous personalities. For Thailand, in particular, UNODC specified that the alternative livelihoods department would be dedicated to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand who in the early 60s inspired and led the first successful crop substitution and sustainable alternative development programmes in the northern highlands of the country. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) deemed it appropriate to donate a work of art reflecting His Majesty the King's initiative on sustainable alternative development to celebrate

the 60th Anniversary of His Majesty's Succession to the Throne in 2006 and His Majesty's 80th Birthday Anniversary in 2007.

To produce such a refined work of art, ONCB received good cooperation from the Bangsai Arts and Crafts Centre, the SUPPORT Foundation of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand in doing this important and delicate task.

Mrs. Helga Jaermann, Porcelain Painting Teacher and a notable master in porcelain painting with over 40 years experience in this field, together with her students painted an earthen jar and a lid with intricate symbols of traditional Thai culture. The jar depicted His Majesty the King's work and fruits of sustainable alternative development to replace opium poppy farming in the northern part of Thailand. The Water Urn, one of the Royal Objects symbolizing the kingship, was graciously installed at the top of the jar which was named 'The Jar of Royal Wisdom on Alternative Development' in honour of His Majesty the King.

With their mastery in ceramic painting renowned both domestically and internationally, together, they worked for three months. Their hard work and determination to be a part to honour His Majesty the King as well as show the world their expertise in porcelain painting, eventually led to the completion of the earthen, hand-painted exquisite jar. The jar will be set to be displayed on a unique, hand-made wood stand together with His Majesty



Photos by Office of the Narcotics Control Board of Thailand

the King's portrait, biography and citation regarding the royal initiative on alternative development to better the livelihood of the northern Thai hilltribes.

On 12 March 2007, ONCB organized a ceremony, chaired by ONCB's Secretary-General, Mr. Kitti Limchaikit, who presented the Jar to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for further handover to the UNODC Office in Colombia. The ceremony was attended by officials of the Bangsai SUPPORT Foundation; Deputy Permanent Secretary of Justice, Mr. Charnchao Chaiyanukij; Director-General of the Department of the International Organizations under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kriangsak Kittichaisaree; and UNODC Representative for East Asia and the Pacific, Mr. Akira Fujino.

The jar is not only symbolic of the kingship and initiative of His Majesty the King to be presented to the world community representing His Majesty's wisdom and initiative on sustainable alternative development to elevate the livelihoods of the northern Thai hilltribes but also a special gift from the Royal Thai Government to the UNODC Office in Bogota, Colombia to encourage them to fight the global drug problem. ■

