

HONLEA mural finds a home with UN Bangkok



Commissioner Keely with members of the UN community at the presentation of the HONLEA Friendship Mural to the UN Headquarters in Bangkok.

From l to r: Police Colonel Surachet Dhamadrong (RTP) – Police Major General Krerkphong Pukprayura (RTP) – Commissioner Mick Keely – Ms Keiko Okaido, Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCAP – Dr Sandro Calvani (UNDCP) – Police Lieutenant General Somchai Milindankura (RTP retired) Police Lieutenant General Chanvut Vajrabukka (RTP) – Police Major General Somchart Sawangneutr (RTP) – Federal Agent Paul Osborne, SLO Bangkok.

On March 20, 2002, a mural created by delegates to last October's Asia Pacific region Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) meeting in Sydney was presented to the head of the United Nations International Drug Control Program in Bangkok by Commissioner Mick Keely.

The mural came out of a four-day meeting involving some 140 delegates from 45 countries meeting under the auspices of the UN and is based on artwork by Mark Huddleston, a member of Australia's indigenous community, who had been working with the Australian Federal Police.

"The mural reflects the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that was fostered at the meeting and is intended as a lasting reminder of the determination of members of the Asia Pacific region of HONLEA to work together," Commissioner Keely said.

"The attendance at the Sydney meeting and the spirit that emerged from it reflected a willingness on the part of all delegates to share the leadership in our fight against drugs

– this is significant given the fact that the Asia Pacific region represents around 55 per cent of the world's population.

"The recently released Australian Illicit Drug Report reflects the benefits being achieved through collaboration in the Region, particularly with drugs like heroin, while at the same time pointing to the need for continued close cooperation to combat the rising tide of amphetamine production and abuse.

"There is now widespread recognition that transnational crime in one country is local crime in another. The only way we can disrupt the activities of these groups is to mirror the strategies that they themselves have adopted. This means law enforcement has to become more entrepreneurial, more collegiate and more flexible in the fight against transnational crime

"These principles underpin the strategies coming out of the HONLEA group.

"Hanging the mural at UNDCP headquarters is a permanent reminder of our commitment to the protection of future generations in our region against the evils of drug trafficking and transnational crime," Mr Keely said.