



**Highlights of the  
Conference**



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## 1. Introduction

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Recovery Conference took place in Colombo Hilton, Sri Lanka, from 29<sup>th</sup> May – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2005, with the theme selected in line with the recent thirst for spirituality in Asia following the effects of the devastating Tsunami, appropriately as '*Beyond Treatment and Rehabilitation – Achieving Maturity in Recovery through Faith*'. A total of 188 delegates from 20 countries appearing in Annex A, participated in this very colourful event and the focus was on "Recovery from addiction as a spiritual journey". As 'whole person recovery' is the objective of any drug treatment and rehabilitation programme, AFTC joined in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Recovery Conference and availed of this opportunity to make it their Sixth Biennial Conference.

This conference with the detailed programme in Annex B, is jointly organised by the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (CPDAP), Asian Federation of Therapeutic Communities (AFTC) and Mithuru-Mithuro Movement (MMM), and is funded by the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), US Department of State.

The general objectives of the conference were:

- Updating governmental and non-governmental organisations on the latest developments in drug treatment and rehabilitation with regard to policies strategies and treatment modalities in Asia;
- Empowering policy makers, treatment practitioners, religious leaders, recovering persons and concerned others to assist in the recovery process by equipping them with the relevant skills and knowledge;
- Providing a platform for the sharing of experiences, the articulation of ideas and the formulation of strategies for the continued growth of therapeutic communities in Asia; and
- Facilitating networking among policy makers, treatment professionals, religious leaders, substance abuse counsellors, recovering persons, co-dependents and concerned others.

## 2. Inauguration

The Chief Guest and other distinguished dignitaries were escorted to the venue by a ceremonial parade "*Perahera*" to the beat of traditional Sri Lankan drums. The inauguration ceremony of the conference was officiated by Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachi, Minister of Samurdhi and Poverty Alleviation of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, in the presence of Hon. Sulaiman Hamid, Deputy Minister of Haj and Awqaf (Religious Affairs) of the Islamic Government of Afghanistan; Mr. Thomas Browne, Jr., Deputy Director, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US Department of State; Mr. James F. Entwistle, Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy, Colombo; Rev. K. Bodhananda, Director, Mithuru-Mithuro Movement; Justice Amnuay Intuputi, President, AFTC and Mr. Tay Bian How, Director of CPDAP.

A cultural performance preceded the prayers recited by religious leaders representing all the major faiths. Mr. Tay Bian How and Rev. Bodhananda in their welcome speeches thanked the distinguished delegates who came from near and far to participate in this 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Recovery Conference in Sri Lanka.

Mr. James F. Entwistle, in his delivery, commended the local and regional organisations and individuals involved in drug demand reduction initiatives, who have been as equally effective as those engaged in rehabilitative efforts and restoring the well-being of Sri Lankan people in the post-tsunami period.

Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachi, in her inaugural speech said that the impact of drug abuse is felt not only by the individual but by the society that he or she belonged to. She noted the strained interpersonal relations including family problems that are commonly encountered due to drug abuse. She drew attention to the following points:

- a. The significant role of families in confronting drug abuse problems
- b. Social impacts of drug abuse, such as neglected children, family disharmony, marriage break-ups, domestic violence and illiteracy

- c. The vital roles of community members in guiding drug dependents to lead drug-free lives
- d. The health implications of drug-abuse upon the individuals such as HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C, that impose extra expenditure on a country

The opening ceremony ended with the presentation of a set of publications of the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (CPDAP) to the Chief Guest and the Guests of Honour. This was followed by the launching of the Guidebook on “Minimum Standards for Effective Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Programmes” by Mr. Thomas Browne Jr., Deputy Director, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US Department of State.

### 3. Scientific and Plenary Sessions

#### Scientific Session 1: **Beyond Treatment and Rehabilitation – Achieving Maturity in Recovery through Faith**

Mr. Tilak Rananvirajah, Secretary of Ministry of Internal Security, Sri Lanka chaired this first scientific session with four resource persons as follows:

- Mr. Edgar C. Galvante, Board Member, Dangerous Drugs Board, Philippines
- Mrs. Asha Das, Former Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Government of India
- Mr. Mohammad Ayub, Programme Manager, DOST Welfare Foundation, Peshawar, Pakistan
- Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, Sarvodaya, Sri Lanka

Mr. John Pillai of Malaysia was the rapporteur for this session.

Mr. Galvante in his presentation, pointed out that in recovery from addiction, “Getting sober is easy, staying sober is the hard part. Abstinence is no guarantee that life will be always be the way a person wants it to be”. He stressed that spirituality is a universal phenomenon that obviously answers some very fundamental human needs. Religious or spiritual oriented treatment programmes reminds us that people are willing to endure sacrifice, discipline, moral or spiritual exaltation in pursuit of an ultimate commitment. Hence, these types of programmes can be significant factors that merit consideration and inclusion, when planning appropriate treatment alternatives.

Mrs. Asha Das presented the Indian scenario, including the extent of drug abuse, nature and trends, Indian Government’s response to this multifaceted problem, and the different solutions and approaches in the area of prevention, especially of alcohol. She also shared the different strategies in awareness and preventive education, relapse prevention, and spirituality as a sustainable treatment approach in India.

Mr. Ayub presented situation in Peshawar, Pakistan, which is situated near the Afghan border. He drew attention to the large number of drug addicts, some living with families, some in the streets and some others in jails, as the poorest, most destitute, stigmatized and discriminated, living on the margins of society. He shared the community-based drug demand reduction programme of the DOST Welfare Foundation and compared the differences between centre-based and community-based programmes. He reported on the progress of the Colombo Plan supported Outreach/Drop-in Centre in Peshawar and how they have adopted the TC modality to suit the culture and religion in that region. He also briefed on some of the drug demand reduction services carried out for the Afghan refugees.

At the end of the session, all presenters unanimously advocated the integration of spirituality/faith as an integral component in any treatment approach or modality. In summary, the salient points discussed are as follows:

- Faith or spirituality is an integral component for any treatment programme because:
  - ✓ It provides clients with an optimistic perspectives of lives
  - ✓ It forms the foundation for the development of positive living
  - ✓ It is not only an instrument for recovery but, beyond treatment, it is a way of life
- Spirituality is instrumental in developing resilience and personal competency in recovering persons.

- Spirituality can be an antidote to addiction when it is strategically integrated into the treatment and recovery process.
- Spirituality or faith is also elementary in both institutions-based and community based programmes.

## **Scientific Session 2: What Works in Treatment and Rehabilitation - Minimum Standards and Considerations for Policy Formulation**

Mr. Edgar C. Galvante, Board Member of the Dangerous Drugs Board of the Republic of the Philippines chaired this second scientific session. The following six distinguished resource persons made their presentations in this session.

- Mr. Tay Bian How, Director, Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme
- Dr. Andrea Barthwell, INL Consultant, USA
- Dato' Zainuddin A. Bahari, CEO Humane Treatment Home, Malaysia
- Mrs. V. Thirumagal, TTK Hospital, Chennai, India
- Mr. Ibrahim Salim, Programme Director, MOTEGA Lodge Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre, Indonesia
- Mr. Y. Ratnayake, Executive Director, National Dangerous Drugs Control Board, Sri Lanka

Dr. Novil Wijesekera (DAP) and Mr. John Pillai of Malaysia were the rapporteurs.

Mr. Tay briefed the participants about the role that the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme has played during the past 32 years in combating drug abuse and its contribution to the human resource development efforts of member countries. He outlined the numerous activities undertaken by the DAP in recent years covering all areas of drug demand reduction in the Asia Pacific region. He reiterated his firm belief that treatment works, and acknowledge the TC model as one of the best established residential treatment modalities. He noted with appreciation the role that the Daytop International has played in collaborating with the DAP in promoting the TC modality and thanked INL, US Department of State for its strong support and encouragement in introducing TC as a primary treatment modality in Asia and Pacific. Mr. Tay drew attention to the continuum care approach and phases of pretreatment and aftercare which have been neglected. Continuing his presentation, Mr. Tay brought out some of the most important aspects of drug treatment, rehabilitation and aftercare and the various activities initiated by the DAP, such as:

- Minimum Standards in the Management of Treatment Programmes
- Development of Peer and Family Support Groups
- Integration of Spirituality
- Enhancement of Life Skills
- Recovery Symposia
- Outreach/Drop-in Centres
- Mobilisation of Religious Leaders in Drug Demand Reduction

Ms. Andrea Barthwell spoke mainly about drug policy and the many components of a “Balanced Approach”, including Strategic Targets and Basis of Approach; Variables to Experimentation; New Users vs Non-dependent Users: Risk-Benefit Analysis; and Demand Reduction Intervention Activities: Priority Treatment, etc., among others. She pointed out the emerging problems in developing countries due to cultural shifts, priority changes, environment of use and opportunities related to drug trade

Dato' Zainuddin as one of the contributors to the Guidebook on “Minimum Standards in Management of Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Programmes in Asia”, published by the Colombo Plan DAP, brought out some of the salient features that comprises an effective drug treatment programme and shortcomings of some treatment programmes that impacts adversely on treatment outcomes. He provided information on the core functions that need to be incorporated for a treatment programme to be effective and how the needs of the addict and/or his significant others could be met. He proposed that public policy should set a minimum standard for the establishment and operation of drug treatment facilities.

Mrs. Thirumagal presented the experience of the TTK Hospital in the treatment of drug and alcohol addicts in India and shared some of the indigenous programmes introduced by the TTK Clinical Research Foundation in Chennai, India, which have proven to be effective and has made the TTK Hospital as one of the centres of best practice in the region. She also elaborated the human resource component in effective management of treatment and rehabilitation programmes.

Mr. Ibrahim Salim shared some of the systems and procedures involved in managing treatment and rehabilitation. Making a presentation on Treatment Protocols, he indicated that “Quality is never an accident. It is always the result of careful planning, team work and a commitment to excellence” and the same principle applies to effective drug treatment and rehabilitation. Continuing on the same subject, he listed guiding principles for documentation, purpose of documentation, how records be maintained especially on computerised documentation.

Finally, Mr. Ratnayake presented the Sri Lankan Experience in the implementation of minimum standards, pertaining to outreach and early interventions; treatment interventions; access, availability and admission of clients; client assessment; treatment content, provision and organisation, discharge, aftercare and referrals; and clients rights and responsibilities. He also explained the national policy and minimum standards on physical aspects of treatment settings, standards of staffing and proposed considerations for policy formulation.

In the questions and answers session, the issue of *Harm Reduction* generated heated queries from the audience. Generally, *Harm Reduction* such as needle exchange or needle giveaway programme in the Asian region is not acceptable. Dr. Andrea Barthwell suggested that this conference submit a resolution to the United Nations that *Harm Reduction* initiative of needle exchange be rejected.

At the end of this scientific session, every participant received a copy of the CPDAP’s publication of “Management of Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Programmes in Asia” (A Guidebook on Minimum Standards).

## Plenary Session 1: Recovery – A Spiritual Journey

Dato’ Zainuddin A, Bahari of Malaysia chaired the Plenary Session 1 and the four resource persons presented their papers at this session as follows:

- Dr. Andrea Barthwell, INL Consultant, USA
- Hon. Sulaiman Hamid, Deputy Minister of Haj and Awqaf, Afghanistan
- Rev. Pannyendra, Sri Lanka
- Phra Weerapan K. Rakkitasilo, Thailand

The rapporteurs were Mr. M. Samah of Malaysia and Mr. Fadilan Kayong of Maldives.

Dr. Andrea Barthwell explained the three major stages of the recovery journey and made a detailed presentation on the twelve steps to be followed during the recovery journey.

Hon. Sulaiman Hamid making his presentation in the “Dari”, Afghan National Language, reminded the prohibitions in Islam relating to alcohol and drug abuse. He further stated the various measures being undertaken by the new Government of Afghanistan in relation to drug demand reduction and the steps his own Ministry has taken to involve the religious leaders in educating the public from their places of worship.

Rev. Pannyendra drew attention of the participants to the Buddhist way of life and pointed out that Lord Buddha in laying down the “Pancha Seela”, the Five Precepts to be followed by his disciples, specifically has mentioned among these Precepts that indulging in the use of alcohol or any other intoxicants is a hindrance in the path to liberation and every Buddhist is expected to adhere to the Five Precepts. If the drug dependents through Buddhist teachings could be encouraged to follow these, it will help them to break away from this unhealthy habit.

Phra Weerapan in his message said that recovery is not just a journey but he sees it as a “Voyage”, as it resembles a journey by sea, facing a lot of dangers from all quarters, such as pirates, storms, shipwrecks, etc.. The recovery voyage, just as a voyage by sea, involves facing similar situations and needs faith, hope and commitment. He further explained that as religious leaders, they are called upon to help in this aspect because of willingness and attitude, both of which are matters of the mind, heart and spirit and only religion has an appeal to these faculties of our being. He shared therapy being practices in Moral Development Foundation of Thailand and explained the three “A” s of life, i.e. Acceptance, Appreciation and Approval, which are elements that may have contributed to their being taken into the trap of drug abuse and addiction.

Overall, the points each speaker made were of a similar note, that is, spiritual journey elevates the potentials of recovering persons to achieve maturity in recovery and the points highlighted can be summarized as follows:

- Islam encourages religious observation, values and rituals as a way of life in combating drug abuser.
- Seeking help from GOD is essential for sustaining recovery.
- Having to have and practice faith, hope and commitment is central towards success in the whole process of recovery.
- Using meditation as a means to recuperate from addictive dysfunctions.
- Religious leaders need to mobilize their alliances in combating drug abuse. Using resources as a vehicle to move its coalition in specific strategic areas of supply and demand reduction effort.
- 12 steps process guidelines help facilitate self-examination towards self-actualization in recovery effort.
- Experiences of coming into the program and taking stock to help eliminate denial as a first step towards recovery.
- Honesty, open-mindedness and willingness are the primary principles that will help facilitate the 12 steps ensuring total abstinence and well being of the addicted individual.
- Illustration of 12 steps through the concept of giving up, cleaning it up, making it up and keeping it up are the basic tenets of the working guide.

## **Plenary Session 2:            Achieving Maturity in Recovery Through Faith**

Mr. M. Samah of Malaysia moderated this interactive forum of senior recovering persons consisting of:

- Mr. Benjamin Ong (Malaysia)
- Mr. Anil Wali (India)
- Mr. Dulsara Vidanagama (Sri Lanka)
- Mr. Mohamad Iqbal (Pakistan)
- Mr. Mohamed Shifa (Maldives)
- Ms. Rashidah Begum binte Sulaiman (Singapore)
- Mr. Andre Simanjutak (Indonesia)

Ms. Tania Fernando of Sri Lanka and Mr. Roslan Yahya of Malaysia were the rapporteurs.

The seven speakers shared and elaborated on their experience on the following.

- How did they experience spirituality?
- Was there any special or notable experience that you went through at the beginning?
- What made you decide to stay on this path? (is it your personal growth or people's acceptance or what)
- What are the signs and symptoms that denote one is going through a spiritual awakening?
- Do you think your life would be different if you had not chosen this path?
- How does it affect, positively and significant others?
- What is your experience on the use of substitution drugs?

Generally, all the seven presenters believed that they needed to believe in Higher Power to achieve maturity in recovery. Relating to drug substitution, they concluded the following:

- One bad thing to another bad thing.
- I was addicted 30 times on drugs, pills and other substances. It did not help. Therefore there is no substitute.
- Personal belief is abstinence.
- Recovery is not only stopping drugs but it is also growth, becoming connected with family. This cannot be reached by substitutes. So abstinence is the ultimatum.
- Substitution drug is another form of control, recovery is relinquishing control.
- By using substitution drug, you may get other disorders and complications such as Psychosis.

## Plenary Session 3: Living with a Recovering Person - Recreating the Family Harmony

Ms. Ma Elena Cristobal of Philippines was the moderator for this interactive forum and the presenters were codependents as follows:

- Mr. Gregory Imperial (Philippines)
- Ms. Melanie Hermanto (Indonesia)
- Ms. Jayadevi Sadasivan (India)
- Ms. Zaiton Zainal Abidin (Malaysia)
- Ms. K. A. Soma Kalubowila (Sri Lanka)

Dr. Novil Wijesekara (DAP) and Ms. Nishalie Fernandopulle (DAP) were the rapporteurs.

The session took off slowly but gradually picked up its momentum. There were deliberations on issues such as Co – dependency, Recovering partners, Roles of families, Healing process and whole family recovery. The points shared in the forum were:

- Living with a recovering person
  - √ Communication and family harmony breaks down – difficult to relate to the addict
  - √ Anxiety and fear grows
  - √ Blame environment – look for change
  - √ Life falls apart
  - √ Depression and feelings of inadequacy and guilt grow
  - √ Try to maintain a facade of “everything’s fine”
  - √ Avoid the issue
  - √ Avoid society
  - √ Become over protective
  - √ Feelings of resignation set in
- Recovering person in a treatment centre
  - √ The 1<sup>st</sup> step to recovery is treatment
  - √ Fluidity of feelings... relief, hope, sadness, anger, hopelessness
  - √ Didn't want to visit the addict / Wanted to be a part of the recovery
  - √ Focus on personal recovery – recovery is not only for the addict
  - √ Get prepared for reunions
- Recreating the family harmony
  - √ Get involved in family support groups
  - √ Talk directly to the dependent – avoid triangulation, communicate
  - √ Learn to ‘let go’
  - √ Hold the family unit together – stay connected
  - √ Avoid judgments / standards
  - √ Give the addict responsibility – make him feel needed
  - √ Set boundaries
  - √ Pray
  - √ Feelings of trauma and apprehension remain
  - √ Get the addict's cooperation – make recovery a family experience
  - √ Change attitudes and behaviour
  - √ Build up trust and transparency



## Plenary session 4: Cross Addiction and Recovery

Prof. Nalaka Mendis of Sri Lanka chaired this session with the following paper presenters:

- Dr. Sarath Samarage (Sri Lanka)
- Justice Vicha Mahakun (Thailand)
- Dr. Chencho Dorji (Bhutan)
- Dr. Rommel Garcia (Philippines)
- Dr. Suresh Kumar (India)

Mr. M. Samah of Malaysia and Ms. Tania Fernando of Sri Lanka were the rapporteurs.

Dr. Samarage explained what is cross-addiction and informed about the similarities of how dependency on one drug often creates a cross-tolerance for similar drugs. He mentioned that people even become cross-dependent on activities. In his presentation, he provided *“A Guide for the Identification of Substances”* and also attached *“A Practitioners Guide for Medications in Alcohol and Drug Dependence”* to his paper.

Dr. Chencho Dorji’s paper was based on “Cognitive Behavioural Approaches to the Management of Addictive Behaviour”. He explained the aspects of cognitive behaviour, principles of cognitive behavioural approaches, the concept of dependence in the cognitive behavioural approach, understanding the process of behaviour change and implications for counseling problem drug users.

Dr. Rommel Garcia observed that all types of addictions are essentially based upon nature and nurture and are characterized by three main features: Chemical dependency, learned behaviours and habits, and denial of both the need and habit. His presentation focused more on prevention of cross addiction.

Dr. Suresh Kumar provided the classification of drugs of abuse. Taking each type of drug separately he explained the methods of use, different classes of drugs, cross-addiction between the classes and cross-addiction outcomes. He further explained the relationship between alcohol and tobacco; Benzodiazepine abuse among recovering alcoholics, other drugs abused by stimulant users and neurobiology of addiction. He gave detailed presentation on “Why Drugs are Addictive” and how they work on the pleasure and reward system in the brain.

The above presenters provided the participants with a comprehensive and valuable input pertaining to ‘cross addiction’– its process, cause and effect, forms and approaches in dealing with it.

## Plenary Session 5: Sharing of TC Practices in Asia – Challenges and Future Directions

Justice Vicha Mahakun of Thailand chaired this plenary session with the following five distinguished resource persons:

- Rev. K. Bodhananda (Sri Lanka)
- Mr. Padet Ringrawd (Thailand)
- Mr. Muhammad Yunus Pathi (Malaysia)
- Mr. Eddie Castillo (Philippines)
- Mr. Muhammad Ayub (Pakistan)

Ms. Nishalie Fernandopulle (DAP) and Dr. Novil Wijesekera (DAP) were the rapporteurs.

Rev. Bodhananda explained his early exposure to the TC modality, thanking the Colombo Plan DAP and the Daytop International and shared his experience in introducing what he gained into the Mithuru-Mithuro drug treatment and rehabilitation facility and his success in establishing 10 TC treatment centres throughout Sri Lanka.

Similarly, Mr. Padet also shared his experience of TC practices, challenges and future directions in the Department of Corrections in Thailand.

Being a pioneer of practicing TC in Asia, Mr. Yunus brought the attention of the participants to the early beginnings of TC in the United States, about the first therapeutic community in Asia and the adoption and adaptation

of TC in Malaysia. He mentioned that harm reduction through needle exchange is never a part of TC approach. He said that it is unfortunate that some TC organizations in Asia have included needle exchange in their programmes and this has eroded TC's image as drug free communities.

Mr. Eddie Castillo reaffirming his firm belief in the concept of TC, said that he makes sure that the TC concept is implemented as it should be in his facility Seagulls Flight Foundation. He summarized the keys to successful implementation of TC in Seagulls. He also presented the TC situation in the Philippines, Challenges/Obstacles, Driving Forces that Sustain TC Initiatives, Restraining Forces that Derail TC Initiatives, Key Steps and New Directions.

Mr. Ayub once again shared the achievements and challenges of the DOST Therapeutic Community and added their experience in developing self-help and peer support groups, vocational skills and employment, reintegration and family counseling.

There were lengthy discussions on the challenges and direction of the TC in this region. It was agreed that AFTC and other related regional organisations need to undertake concrete measures to further promote the modality in the region. However the session made the following recommendations.

- Umbrella organisations and agencies should play a more substantial role in elevating the quality of TC programmes in this region, especially the AFTC
- Incorporating of the TC components in to existing programmes should be encouraged
- Steps need to be taken to encourage proper and standardised documentation in order to make TC a more acceptable modality to medical practitioners / perceived as a disease and scientifically diagnosed.
- Inter-organisational co-operation among TC programmes in this region should be promoted by:
  - √ Providing a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience
  - √ Exchange of programme personnel
  - √ Joint training programmes and other activities at regional level

## 4. Concurrent Workshops

Four concurrent workshops took place in the afternoon of the second day. They are:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Workshop 1: | Family Therapy ( <i>Ms. Malyn Cristobal - Philippines</i> )   |
| Workshop 2: | Twelve Steps ( <i>Mr. Benjamin Ong - Malaysia / Mr. Ibrahim Salim, Programme Director, MOTEKA Lodge Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre, Indonesia</i> )          |
| Workshop 3: | Minimum Standards ( <i>Dato' Zainuddin A. Bahari, CEO Humane Treatment Home, Malaysia / Mr. Ed Castillo - Philippines / Mr. Fadilan Abdul Kayong - Maldives</i> ) |
| Workshop 4: | Life Skills in Relapse Prevention ( <i>Mrs. V. Thirumagal, TTK Hospital, Chennai, India / Mr. M. Samah - Malaysia</i> )   |

All workshops were conducted excellently, meeting the expectations of the participants. The workshops provided participants with firsthand experience in learning the relevant skills needed to upgrade their competencies.

## 5. Colombo International Narcotics Anonymous Open Meeting

Mr. Omar Abdullah from Malaysia chaired this Colombo International Narcotics Anonymous Open Meeting with the following facilitators:

- Ms. Malyn Crisobal (Philippines)
- Mr. Roslan Yahya (Malaysia)
- Mr. Benjamin Ong (Malaysia)
- Mr. Ibrahim Salim (Indonesia)
- Mr. Fadilan Abdul Kayong (Maldives)
- Ms. Rashidah Begum binte Sulaiman (Singapore)
- Ms. Ernietriana binte Mustafa Kamal (Singapore)

This is the second international NA meeting held at the Asian Recovery Symposium. The meeting started at 20:30 on 1 June 2005 and ended at 22:00. It was attended by more than 30 fellow members from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Maldives, Philippines, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

It was an open meeting where fellow members could share their recoveries. Mr. Omar encouraged fellow members to share how they were introduced to NA meeting. The meeting was lively as most of the fellow members came from different countries. 20 minutes before the meeting ended, there was a question and answer session. Public information on Narcotics Anonymous was made known to all the members. The meeting ended with the recitation of the Serenity Prayer, recited in Urdu followed by the English version.

## 5. Field Trips

The conference was not confined to mere plenary sessions, workshops and official dinners. On 2 June 2005 the delegates visited Mithuru Mithuro Centres in Pelmadulla ('Sevana'), Gampaha ('Nisansala') and Homagame ('Sisilasa'). Here the delegates were exposed to, and debated upon, the activities, the ideas and science behind some of the finest treatment centres in the region.

Participants took off in buses as early as 6.30 am in the morning and came back late in the evening. A majority of them expressed their sense of satisfaction and excitement for the knowledge and experiences they gained from the trips.

## 6. Recommendations

Justice Amnuay Intuputi, President of AFTC and Mr. Martin Infante, a Board Member of AFTC chaired this concluding plenary of recommendations. The executive summary and recommendations of the conference was presented by the Rapporteur General, Mr. Mohamed Samah. The conference recommendations were unanimously accepted by the participants as follows:

- Service providers should be competent and committed in making sure that recovering persons develop genuine spiritual growth that will form a strong foundation for recovery while they are in the programmes to last even beyond treatment.
- All attending policy makers, religious leaders, treatment practitioners, substance abuse counsellors, recovering persons, people with HIV / AIDS, recovering codependents and concerned individuals, strongly and unanimously reject needle exchange programmes to be part of their drug demand reduction strategies and approaches.
- All programme practitioners should take the necessary measures to ensure that their drug demand reduction initiatives and efforts comply with binding minimum standards.
- Participants at the conference should encourage and empower religious leaders and members of faith-based organisations to engage themselves in making substantial contributions towards reducing the incidents of drug abuse upon society and empower community members to undertake organised anti drug activities.
- Treatment practitioners are to empower both recovering persons and their family members embark on an inter-complementary healing process to reinstall family harmony.
- The Asian Federation of Therapeutic Communities should advocate that treatment works; and assist affiliated organisations to give priority to programme management, quality of service, clients' satisfaction, staff competency and programme outcomes in order to upkeep the good image of the modality.
- Equip treatment practitioners and related service providers with the know-how in managing clients / patients who are people with HIV / AIDS.

Dr. Andrea Barthwell presented the 'Colombo Declaration' that contained written disapproval of the needle exchange programme, which as far as drug demand reduction is concerned, has led to many complications, and encouraged total abstinence as practiced in the TC programmes.

## 7. Closing Ceremony

The closing ceremony on 3 June 2005 was officiated by Mr. Thomas Browne Jr. Deputy Director, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), U.S. Department of State, who delivered the closing remarks. Official speeches were also presented by Rev. K. Bodhananda (Director, Mithuro Mithuro Movement), Mr. Tay Bian How (Director, Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme) and Justice Amnuay Intuputi (President, Asian Federation of Therapeutic Communities). The joint-organisers expressed their appreciation to the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), U.S. Department of State, the chairpersons, presenters, facilitators, moderators, rapporteurs, secretariat staff, delegates and all others responsible for the successful implementation of the conference.

## 8. Photo Gallery



*Mr. Thomas Browne Jr., Deputy Director, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US Department of State lights the traditional oil lamp during the inauguration ceremony.*



*VVIPs at the inauguration ceremony, from left: Mr. Tay Bian How, Director, Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme, Mr. Thomas Browne Jr., Deputy Director, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US Department of State, Mr. James Entwistle, Deputy Chief-of-Mission, American Embassy - Colombo, Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachi, Minister of Samurdhi and Poverty Alleviation, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Hon. Sulaiman Hamid, Deputy Minister Haj and Awqaf, Islamic Government of Afghanistan, Justice Amnuay Intuputi, President, Asian Federation of Therapeutic Communities and Rev. K. Bodhananda, Director, Mithuru Mithuro Movement.*



*Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachi, Minister of Samurdhi and Poverty Alleviation, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, officiates the Conference.*



*Mr. James Entwistle, Deputy Chief-of-Mission, American Embassy - Colombo, graces the inauguration ceremony.*



*Hon. Sulaiman Hamid, Deputy Minister Haj and Awqaf, Islamic Government of Afghanistan, addressing the audience in the inauguration ceremony*



*CPDAP's publication "A guidebook on minimum standards - Management of Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Programmes in Asia" launched in the conference.*



*Mr. Thomas Browne Jr. presents the CPDAP's latest publication to the Hon. Minister Pavithra Wanniarachi.*



*Mr. Tay Bian How presents a plaque of appreciation to the Hon. Minister Pavithra Wanniarachi.*



*Mr. Tay Bian How presents a plaque of appreciation to Mr. James Entwistle.*



*Part of the audience in the 6<sup>th</sup> AFTC / 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Recovery Conference.*



*Mr. Thomas Browne Jr. graces the Mithuru Mithuro Movement Graduation Ceremony.*



*Sri Lankan cultural performance at the Mithuru Mithuro Movement Graduation Ceremony.*



*Mr. Thomas Browne presents the Life Time Achievement Award to a Mithuru Mithuro Movement graduate.*



*Justice Amnuay Intuputi presents the Life Time Achievement Award to a recovery person.*



*Justice Amnuay Intuputi presents a token of appreciation to Mr. Thomas Browne.*



*Mr. Tay Bian How accepts a souvenir from Rev. K. Bodhananda.*



*Rev. K. Bodhananda presents a memento to AFTC Secretary Ms. Somnuck Ridprasert.*



*Thai delegation at the Conference.*

