

particularly in northern Burma. Some felt that information is very hard to get where ever you are, that it is hard to know who to trust and whether information is credible. It is questionable whether much can be learned while in Rangoon. People don't talk to foreigners and if they do they are arrested immediately. Others felt that drug information needs to be much more comprehensive and intelligence shared with other national interests. The police believe they can not do this from Bangkok alone.

Canada should continue to support democratic and civil society development and humanitarian work (including drug prevention) at the Burmese borders. The UN approach has been to work with Burmese people outside of Burma. When transition to a new government occurs this means there will be some elements for a strengthened infrastructure and leadership with a history of democracy even though the existing systems, including the military, will be still in place. Burma is not open, there is no transparency, no freedom of the press – it is easy to hide what is going on in the country. In any transition, democratization will help ease the drug trade but will not solve it.

Canada could work with partners and institutions in the region by providing training for regional partners such as Thailand to curb the demand for drugs. Although it was generally felt ASEAN has been ineffective, some felt drugs have become such a growing issue that ASEAN should be doing something about drugs. Canada could raise regional security issues with ASEAN members and address the fragmentation of information with Southeast Asia. More openness, access to and sharing of information could help break the wall of silence on drugs.

Canada is a small player in the drug issue but could push for greater international coherence on supply and demand reduction. Addressing the drug problem is similar to small arms – a complex combination of supply and demand, health, legal and human security issues. Canada's domestic policies should be in tandem with it's foreign policy. More financial support is needed by Canadian communities, such as Vancouver, which are dealing with an international problem with only local resources.

CONCLUSION:

For some, the promotion of democracy is the only answer to Burma's many problems – problems which include human rights abuses, displaced people along the borders, political repression, drug lords and a military which controls an international drug trade. Others strongly feel that the drug issue must be dealt with at the source while respecting the value of isolating and not assisting a brutal and repressive regime.

It is clear that the Burmese (as stated by government-in-exile representatives) want to solve their own problems. Foreigners may provide analysis and push from the outside but the Burmese will take their country through a transition to a different government. Power-sharing, peace through