

RCMP stationed in Bangkok and Vancouver police officers are restricted in their drug trafficking investigations and access to already fragmented information about the source and movement of drugs from Burma.

The United Nations approach is a strong commitment to working and assisting at the village level in areas of basic human needs like health. The National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (government-in-exile) indicated they would want contact and cooperative partnerships with the current regime in a transition to a new government.

Canada has repeatedly called on the Burmese regime to enter into political discussions with the democracy movement in the country, called on Canadian firms not to trade or invest in Burma and has called on the country to reduce the production and trafficking of illegal drugs. The question for Canada is: Has the hard line approach been effective? If so, in what way has there been some progress? If not, what are other approaches to consider?

REGIONAL RELATIONS - STABILITY AND SECURITY - WHAT IS CANADA'S ROLE?

Is ASEAN paralyzed or could it take some action in dealing with the drug trade? Is ASEAN serious about the question of drugs in the region? This is still unclear although there have been some more open discussions among members. Canada has little leverage with the region but it could act as a facilitator and encourage ASEAN to take some action on regional alternatives that might be more acceptable.

The India-China- and Burma rivalry is very complex to sort out. India and others, however, do listen to what Canada says. Canada could work with Thailand on lowering demand. Thailand seems more ready to break the mold and admit they need to do something about drugs. Although China is more concerned about Afghanistan as a source of drugs, China (and the President) could put pressure on others to address the Burma supply. The connection between intravenous heroin use and HIV is a major regional security and health issue especially among younger Asian population. Japan, Taiwan and South Korea are also players to watch in the future.

It was suggested that lessons learned about the drug trade in Latin America could be used in Southeast Asia- perhaps there are shared common problems and some elements of a common approach could be used in the region.

WHERE DOES CANADA GO FROM HERE?

Should Canada continue a hard line, a harder line or begin to think through other options of how to deal with the source of drugs while not supporting the regime? The Australians, for example have stationed a police member in Rangoon to try to get more information about drugs,