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Office on Drugs and Crime

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# The Inaugural Southeast Asia Sport and Youth Crime Prevention Conference 2025

*Building Safer and More Resilient Communities Through Sport*

27 – 28 November 2025

The Grand Fourwings Convention Hotel Bangkok  
Srinakarin Road, Bangkok, Thailand

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## CONCEPT NOTE

### 1. BACKGROUND

Youth population across Southeast Asia faces a range of interconnected challenges, including poverty, social exclusion, lack of education and employment opportunities, mental health vulnerabilities, and substance abuse. These conditions render youth susceptible to exploitation, especially involvement in drugs, crime, gangs, and violence. The risks they face are further exacerbated by rapid urbanisation, digital exposure and the lingering impacts of the pandemic. Such phenomenon in this region is also felt the world over, undermining social cohesion, economic stability, and individual well-being.

Sport has long been recognised as an accelerator of peace and sustainable development. It provides safe spaces, mentorship, skill-building, a sense of belonging, discipline, teamwork, fair play, respect, and leadership, all of which are key protective factors that support positive youth development. With its universal appeal and unique ability to transcend cultural and social divides, sport offers an effective avenue for youth crime prevention and pathways to constructive engagement.

***On 1 July 2025, the Southeast Asia Sport and Youth Crime Prevention (SYCP) Initiative was launched by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Agence Française de Développement (AFD), in collaboration with a consortium led by Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice (AoS). Together, they unite global and local partners to reduce anti-social behaviour, drugs, crime and violence and foster safer, more inclusive, and resilient communities across Southeast Asia.***

To build on the momentum of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Southeast Asian Games to be hosted by Thailand from 9-20 December 2025, convening this inaugural conference is a timely opportunity to engage key international stakeholders and raise awareness on the SCYP Initiative.

The conference will bring together a diverse set of stakeholders to examine the root causes of youth crime and drug abuse and explore the role of sport in prevention, intervention, and recovery; and enable participants to share knowledge, emerging evidence, and effective practices from Southeast Asia and globally.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

### a. Facilitate cross-sector dialogue and knowledge exchange

- Examine the multifaceted links between sport, sustainable development, and youth crime prevention
- Share effective practices, lessons learned, and success stories that leverage sport for drug and crime prevention, health, rehabilitation and social protection from Southeast Asia and beyond
- Raise awareness among policymakers and the public about the significant potential of sport as a cost-effective and impactful tool for youth crime prevention strategies

### b. Strengthen regional collaboration and capacity for collective action

- Deepen cross-sectoral partnerships between sports bodies, justice and law enforcement, public security, youth, social development, health and education
- Support the co-creation of evidence-informed approaches to sport-based youth crime and drug prevention.

### c. Catalyse co-investment opportunities and policy momentum

- Position the SYCP Initiative as a vehicle for co-investment and policy alignment by showcasing the impact and cost-effectiveness of sport-based prevention models
- Identify pathways to embed sport in national and regional crime prevention strategies.