DRUG POLICY IN INDONESIA,

LAW AMENDMENT BUT PUNITIVE APPROACH REMAINS

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Abstract

The first Indonesian law on narcotics (Law Number 22 year 1997) was amended and the Indonesian’s government and parliament introduced a new law on narcotics i.e. Law Number 35 year 2009. This article argues that though the new law does introduce some positive measures e.g. addressing health concerns through the requirement to provide medical and social rehabilitation for individuals who are dependent on drugs, the law in fact still preserves most of the spirit of Indonesia’s “war on drugs”. However, it is noteworthy that though the Indonesia Government still applies a punitive and repressive approach to drug use and drug dealing, the Government also acknowledges the increasing contribution of risky drug injection practices to HIV epidemics. Since 2003 the Government had initiated a process that allows for the provision of harm reduction programs in the country. These indicate the ambivalence of the Indonesian government in dealing with drug issues and drug-related problems in the country.