

**The Human Security Network Workshop
on HIV and AIDS
25 July 2005 , Geneva**

On 25 July 2005, the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva hosted the Human Security Network (HSN) Workshop on HIV and AIDS at Hotel Epsom Manotel, Geneva. Dr. Chaiyong Satjipanon, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand, chaired the workshop, which was attended by 26 representatives from 12 (out of 14) HSN countries and from key international agencies in the field of HIV and AIDS, namely UNAIDS, WHO and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM).

Two major themes of the workshop are (1) Human security and HIV prevention among young people – the new generation, and (2) Effective functioning of health systems to increase access to HIV prevention, treatment and care. In each theme, focus will be on (1) reporting current situation and progress, (2) identifying key enabling or disabling factors, and (3) indicating challenges and needed support.

Realizing the negative impacts of HIV and AIDS on human security in terms of individual well-being and socioeconomic development, the workshop participants agreed that HIV prevention among young people is crucial to the promotion of human security in every respect, for young people represent invaluable human resource of a society. They identified factors that contributed to the progress of implementation in this area, such as formal and informal awareness raising and education (e.g. peer education, campaign using role models acceptable to the new generation, etc.), free access to prevention products and counseling, promotion of interaction and activities between young people and a group of infected people. Despite the progress, challenges are evident, including budget and human resource constraints, difficult balance between awareness raising and education on HIV prevention on the one hand and promotion of irresponsible sexual activities on the other, resistance from groups of religious and political conservatives, declining interest in the issue in countries where HIV and AIDS is not a major problem, etc.

With regard to the issue of effective functioning of health systems to increase access to HIV prevention, treatment and care, key enabling factors are the existence of a coordinated body and a quality network. Civil society's participation will strengthen such a network and help boost the effectiveness of access to HIV prevention, treatment and care. Media also has a role to play in monitoring and making the public known about such implementations. Challenges that could come in the way, however, entail inadequate budget and human resource as well as underdeveloped health infrastructures. In response to these challenges, participating agencies reaffirmed their support to help needed HSN countries to overcome the problems. GFATM, for instance, informed the meeting that health system development is singled out as a new priority for GFATM's financing, while WHO offered to help needed countries to simplifying anti-retroviral treatment combination in order to enhance treatment effectiveness.

Apart from exchange of views on the aforementioned topics, representatives of HSN countries basically agreed on the content of the draft of "Guidelines for Cooperation on HIV and AIDS Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support with Focus on Young People and Health Systems," aimed to be submitted to HSN Ministers for adoption at the Informal Ministerial Working Lunch to be hosted by H.E. Dr. Kantathi Suphamongkol,

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, in New York on 18 September 2005. The draft will be forwarded to concerned authorities in respective capitals for further consideration. The workshop participants agreed to inform the Permanent Mission of Thailand of additional inputs by 2 August 2005.

In summary, the HSN Workshop on HIV and AIDS was a success, thanks to active participation of representatives from HSN countries and concerned agencies. All participants thanked Thailand for hosting the workshop, which would undoubtedly contribute to raising awareness of HSN countries and the general public as well as encouraging follow-up and monitoring the progress made to be widely undertaken both within the HSN framework and beyond.