

Unofficial Translation

First National Health Assembly
Agenda 3.2

Revised Draft Resolution 1/2
13 December 2008

Universal Access to Essential Medicines

The First National Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on Universal Access to Essential Medicines,

Aware that as medicines are moral goods, the country needs to have sufficient essential medicines for thoroughly distributed and timely public use, allowing them to be self-reliant and allowing all Thai people to have access to medicine,

Taking note that many people and patients cannot have access to essential medicines because of limited resources. The government cannot supply sufficient essential medicines to meet the demand. In addition, the prices of patented medicines are too expensive for most people. Although the patent system reflect the law's good intention to promote research and development as well as *technology transfer*, past experiences have shown that practice has not been in such direction, especially with regard to technology transfer. Furthermore, providing long term monopolies will result in restricted access to medicines.

Concerned that the medicinal expenses in Thailand have gone up over the past several years. Between 2000 and 2005, drug expenditures went up by 13 – 20 %, whereas the rate of economic growth increased only 2.2-7.1%. Therefore, Thailand's spending on medicines is higher than the rate of economic growth. The increase rate of medicinal expenses in Thailand is also against that of international drug market, whose expenses have been decreasing from 11.7 % in 2000 to 6.8 % in 2005. In addition, Thailand has no clear drug pricing policy, no efficient drug price control system, and no regulatory body to ensure that drug prices are reasonable, fair, and reflect their true cost. Price fixing is only from the manufacturers' side, hence medicines are sold in very high prices.

Aware that there are many policies and laws related which could allow people in remote areas to access to medicines with reasonable prices, such as the National Drug Policy 1981 and 1993, the regulations of the Ministry of Public Health on Procurement of Drugs Using the Budget of Government Agencies under the Ministry of Public Health 1981, dated 1 October 1981, Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreements (TRIPs), The Patent Act, B.E. 2522 (1979) and the Patent System, and Paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration.

The National Health Assembly hereby issues the following resolutions:

1. To adopt the Strategy on Universal Access to Medicines for Thai People, as annexed to this resolution.
 2. To request the National Health Commission to:
 - 2.1 Propose the Strategy on Universal Access to Medicines for Thai People to the Cabinet for approval and for Cabinet to order the setting up of operational plans in line with the strategy.
 - 2.2 Press for a mechanism to draft operation plans with participation from relevant agencies
 - 2.3 Monitor the progress of operational plan implementation
 - 2.4 Co-ordinate with relevant agencies to implement urgent strategies or strategies which need to be put to practice immediately.
 - 2.5 Report to the Third National Health Assembly the implementation of the strategy of access to essential medicines.
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