

THE ICAAP10 HERALD

26-30 August 2011, BEXCO, Busan, Republic of Korea

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www.icaap10.org



"Diverse Voices, United Action"



ICAAP10 participants pose at the exhibition hall at BEXCO on Monday, a day before the five-day congress comes to an end.

Meet in Bangkok, Thailand, for ICAAP11 in 2013!

By Song Sang-ho

Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, will host the 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific in 2013, hoping to further galvanize global commitment and collective action to combat the epidemic, organizers said Monday.

For the next edition of the world's second largest forum on AIDS, the city also seeks to share its expertise honed through its decades-long struggles against it and discuss strategic, innovative methods to tackle issues surrounding it.

With the main theme of "Asia/Pacific Reaching Triple Zero: Investing in Innovation," the Bangkok forum will significantly contribute to achieving "three zeros" — zero new HIV infections, discrimination and AIDS-related deaths, the organizers said.

"We would like to invest all our resources to achieve these triple zeros with new innovative ideas, and share our experience and expertise with our colleagues who will participate in our conference," said Wilas Lohitkul, chairman of the ICAAP11 Local Organizing Committee.

Lohitkul and his delegates came to Busan to join the ICAAP10, which ends Tuesday. The five-day Busan congress at BEXCO drew nearly 3,000 people from some 60 countries.

The Thai organizers expressed confidence that the 2013 congress will also be a chance for the city to introduce its effective movements that have enabled all social sectors to join hands in the fight against not only the disease, but also stigma it brings.

"Thailand was dramatically afflicted by HIV/AIDS 20 years ago.

However, through a robust awareness campaign launched in cooperation with the Thai government, NGOs and the private sector, there was a 90 percent decrease in new HIV infections," PCDA Chairman Mechai Viravaidya said.

"We look forward to welcoming you and sharing best practices on out-of-the-box ideas to continue the fight against HIV/AIDS."

PCDA is the Population and Community Development Association, a non-governmental organization, reputed for its pioneering programs in family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention. It leads the organizing body for the 2013 ICAAP.

Leaders of global anti-AIDS campaigns anticipated that the Bangkok ICAAP will be a great success given its embracive climate for vulnerable groups as well as ample experience in hosting large

global events.

"As AIDS was such a big issue in Thailand, they have led an array of successful campaigns such as a 100 percent condom use campaign and public awareness of the illness is very good. With all this, I am confident that the next conference will be very successful," said ICAAP10 LOC Chair Myung-Hwan Cho.

AIDS Society of Asia and the Pacific President Zahid Hussein hoped that the Bangkok forum will ensure that communities can benefit more from it to share and expand their knowledge.

"Each ICAAP is a huge treasure, reservoir of knowledge, but unfortunately, this huge knowledge that we get here, it somehow does not reach the grassroots levels," he said.

"If it is translated into simple

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ICAAP10
Busan, Korea 2011
Diverse Voices, United Action

Day 5
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The official newspaper of the 10th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific.

“Diverse Voices, United Action”

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Busan, Korea

The Organizing Committee of the 10th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific commissioned **The Korea Herald**, a leading English-language newspaper in Korea, to publish an official newspaper that reports on the congress. The editors and the organizers are not responsible for the opinions expressed by the interviewees and published in this review or for any consequences arising from the accuracy of the information herein.

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Plenary tackles MSM, protest issue

By John Power

The fourth plenary session of ICAAP10 on Monday addressed HIV/AIDS prevention among men who have sex with men, while activists demanded that no criminal charges be brought against activists in connection with scuffles with police at a protest on Saturday.

ICAAP community participants read a statement criticizing AIDS Society of Asia and the Pacific, the Local Organizing Committee and the U.N. for not predicting and preventing the “unacceptable police violence” at BEXCO in Busan.

The statement also outlined five demands, including that the police and ICAAP organizers destroy any video or photographic evidence of activists.

Tim Martineau, Director of Program Effectiveness and Country Support at UNAIDS, said, “Our Executive Director Michele Sidibe has also been in close contact with me on the follow up and is raising the concerns from ICAAP during his meet-



ICAAP10 Local Organizing Committee Chair Myung-Hwan Cho delivers a speech during a plenary session at BEXCO on Monday.

ings with senior officials in Seoul.”

LOC Chair Myung-Hwan Cho said: “Today I am trying to have a meeting with the police in authority again for further development. I’ll do my best to deliver this message to them and have them make this happen.”

The first plenary session dedicated to MSM in the history of ICAAP went as scheduled.

Clifton Cortez, of Bangkok-based Asia Pacific Regional Center, outlined the stark nature of HIV/AIDS

prevalence among MSM, noting that, based on current infection rates, they will make up almost half of all new infections in the region by 2020.

“Funding and human resource investments on prevention activities addressing them are still under-resourced,” he warned.

Meanwhile, Dr. Eun-Gyu Lee of Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others held a workshop on South Korea’s response to HIV/AIDS.

Volunteers hope to help end prejudice

By Song Sang-ho

Young people in white T-shirts were the first at BEXCO for ICAAP10 each day, but the last to leave. They did not deliver any speeches, but conveyed a strong message of encouragement to people suffering from HIV/AIDS.

They were ICAAP10 volunteers, who silently carried out their missions behind the scenes to facilitate the biennial forum aimed at raising public awareness and calling for concerted efforts to remove prejudice and stigma surrounding the illness.

For many of them, the five-day conference, which ends Tuesday, was an “enlightening” opportunity for them to break their prejudice, which they said originated from misconceptions about the epidemic.

“Before joining the conference as volunteers, I only saw them through non-fictional media and was wondering about what it would be like to meet in person those living with HIV/AIDS. In the beginning, I was a little worried and anxious,” said Park Jie-eun, a 20-year-old student of Pusan National University.



Volunteers pose in front of the BEXCO building.

“But now, my prejudice appears to have gone, and I believe they are just the same as us leading a normal life. I feel somewhat ashamed that I had such prejudice.”

Some 150 volunteers joined the conference. They now expect themselves to play a role to help improve the public understanding of the illness in Korea.

“While participating in this forum, the volunteers appear to have succeeded in changing their once negative perception of HIV/AIDS,” said Son An-na, 25, a student from Kyongsung University.

“I hope that such a change would have a ripple effect on others in

our society so that people out there would look at them with more compassion.”

Seo Min-jee, a 19-year-old student of Sahmyook University, said that she met many researchers from overseas, whose insights into HIV prevention and treatment will help her study of health management.

“I volunteered to work here as I thought I could learn a lot from international sessions where many scholars deliver lectures and speeches. While talking with foreign researchers, I have made not only friends but also helped them get a good impression of Korea,” she said.



Participants visit the Dongnam Institute of Radiological & Medical Sciences in Busan as part of a field trip.

PHOTO GALLERY



A transgendered participant performs at the exhibition hall.



A participant looks at posters on AIDS at the exhibition hall.



Ishdeep Kohli, a member of Key Correspondents, reads the ICAAP10 Herald.



Participants visit an intensive care unit of the DIRMS.



Participants break the ice at the start of a session.



A volunteer helps a participant find information on ICAAP10.



Participants show a doll, called "kumjing," which was made by a sex worker from Myanmar.

Diverse sexualities, one reality

By Tsdendemberel (Otgoo)
Otgonbaatar

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said that we need to end stigma and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in order to reduce HIV infections. The men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people convened in Busan are determined to battle the stigma and discrimination which have troubled sexual minorities the world over for more than 30 years. And ICAAP10 has been the ideal venue for that.

Over the past few days, there have been a number of thought-provoking, hotly debated sessions on MSM and transgender issues. A satellite meeting themed “Engaging the Health Sector for Scaling Up Services for MSM and Transgender People” discussed the issue of stigma and discrimination within the health sector in great detail and recommended that health care



Tsdendemberel (Otgoo)
Otgonbaatar

providers should be trained to treat and care for people living with HIV/AIDS and other sexuality minorities. During the session, Shivananda Khan expressed his appreciation to the WHO for making efforts to remove homosexuality from the list of psychiatric diseases in many countries. But he pointed out that the sexual minorities of the region need more psychological

and psychiatric counseling when it comes to prevention and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections among MSM and transgender people.

A session titled “Moving from Sheer Quantity to Queer Quality: Emerging HIV and Social Research Issues among MSM and Transgender People” discussed that even though it may take a long time to embrace the outcomes of social studies on HIV/AIDS and MSM transgender issues, the argument is ultimately not about social studies vs. epidemiological studies. The point is that how we are going to document all these brilliant ideas and knowledge and put them into effective action. The challenge facing MSM and transgender people of the region is how to bring the fresh ideas and initiatives home and convert them into reality. The reality is that we all have limited capacities, funds and government support to put an end to stigma and discrimination in terms of sexual

orientation and gender identity, as well as HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

Coming from Mongolia, where transgender people are viewed as perverts, and sex workers and MSM as deviants and virus bearers, ICAAP is an opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and intersex (LGBTQI) rights activists like me to absorb as much as we can to change the reality often imposed on the sexual minorities at home and to advocate the rights we all deserve. As one of the speakers puts it, “MSM/TG and HIV/AIDS are not about condoms; it is all about human beings.” After all, our very own voices yearning for equal rights — regardless of HIV status or sexual orientation or gender identity — unite us. We should continue to be loud and pro-active.

Tsdendemberel (Otgoo) Otgonbaatar from Mongolia is a member of Key Correspondents.



The Grand Palace in Bangkok has many glittering temples and buildings with an exotic array of architectural styles.

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terms and language, it could reach the communities. I believe next congresses should have a built-in mechanism through which they can transfer knowledge to the grass-root levels.”

The city in the Southeast Asian country has long been internationally recognized for its well-organized response to HIV/AIDS with an emphasis on human rights. This has forged an embracive social environment for groups vulnerable to the illness.

Since the first HIV/AIDS case was reported in it in 1984, the city has carried out a series of pro-

grams in tandem with private and public sectors, civil organizations and other concerned parties.

The programs include compulsory sex education at school, enforcement of a “100 percent condom use,” programs to air anti-AIDS messages every hour on all broadcasting networks and measures to de-stigmatize those living with HIV/AIDS.

As a result, the city has seen a considerable decline in the number of people with HIV/AIDS from 81,052 in 1999 to 56,717 in 2010, according to official municipal data.

Bangkok is an attractive city with a balanced mixture of the

ancient and modern features highlighted in a unique trove of cultural attractions. Its cultural heritage has been kept intact as the country was never colonized.

The city also boasts of some 400 glittering Buddhist temples, magnificent palaces, classical dance extravaganzas and numerous shopping centers. The metropolis’ population accounts for more than 10 percent of the total 68 million Thais.

The closing ceremony for the Busan congress is to be held at BEXCO at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

The conference drew much global attention as it offered a crucial venue to reflect on the world’s

arduous fight against HIV/AIDS that began after the first case of HIV/AIDS was reported in the U.S. three decades ago.

Leaders at the vanguard of regional and global campaigns urged the international community to unite to remove stigma and discrimination about the disease. They also stressed the need to improve the legal environment for vulnerable people to achieve “universal access” to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support.

The forum was not without incident. There was a scuffle on Saturday between police and AIDS activists.