

THAILAND 2
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Madam

~~Mr.~~ Chair, the Thai Delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretariat and ESCAP for their well-prepared documents and dedication to organizing this important regional meeting. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to share with you Thailand's comments on this agenda item.

In order to achieve Universal Health Coverage, 3 dimensions including health service coverage, population coverage, and health financial risk protection need to be critically assessed and developed. Thailand has 5 major concerns for the regional UHC strategy development and implementation, namely:

Firstly, financial sustainability. Applying closed-end payment will result in an improvement of system efficiency and cost containment in the long run.

Secondly, UHC should cover a comprehensive benefit package consisting of health promotion, disease prevention and rehabilitation with minimum co-payment.

Thirdly, adequate and equitably distributed health service infrastructure and human resources for health is needed to ensure essential services covered under the UHC.

Fourthly, there is a need to ensure clear progress and achievements based on timely and accurate health information.

Last but not least, the governing structure of the UHC should actively involve all partners, including providers, patient groups, relevant ministries and the academia in a constructive trust-based manner.

On Health and well-being of young people, Thailand aligns itself with many countries in the Asia and the Pacific facing challenges of early marriages, adolescent and young pregnancies.

We have six concerns to highlight:

Firstly, the policy development process should not totally rely on the national average figures, but also socioeconomic characteristics are needed.

Secondly, more research, particularly on vulnerable groups, is urgently needed to fill evidence gaps. These include school drop-outs, minority groups; young people involved in crime; and homeless youths.

Thirdly, policy formulation should be evidence-based.

Fourthly, policy development has to take into account socio-cultural and religious context, and has to be on user-friendly setting in order to promote effectiveness and sustainability.

Fifthly, we must take into consideration the effect of social determinants such as the social media that can have significant effect on teens' behaviors.

Last and equally important, we must not allow any legislative and social barriers and discrimination against pregnant adolescents to prevent their education and access to essential services.

On disability, Thailand has taken measures to enact several laws and regulations for persons with disabilities to ensure an inclusive society and mainstreaming of their human rights protection and promotion on an equal basis.

Thailand has formulated policies and plans in line with the 4th National Plan of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, 2012-2016 as well as the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons (2002-2021) and Old Age Protection and Security by permitting monthly allowance to all older persons aged 60 years and above and established the Elderly Fund.

To this end, Thailand is pleased to organize, in collaboration with the Australian Government, the ESCAP, and the World Bank, a regional consultation titled “The Way Forward: Asia Pacific Regional Consultation on a Disability-Inclusive Development Agenda towards 2015 and Beyond”. The regional consultation will be held at the UN Conference Centre on 15 – 16 May this year. Thailand has invited all ESCAP member states and associate members, representatives of relevant International Organizations and Regional Organizations, as well as members of the civil society to participate in this important event. The outcome of the consultation will be compiled into the region’s input to the High-Level Meeting on the same theme, which will be held in New York on 23 September 2013.

Madam

Thank you ~~ME~~ Chair.
