PRESS RELEASE

Guinness World Record Attempt: 
World’s Longest Condom Chain

BANGKOK, 27 November 2006 – Thailand is set to make history on World AIDS Day, 1 December 2006 in a Guinness World Record™ attempt for the Longest Condom Chain. The campaign aims to promote a uniquely Thai “sanook” acceptance of condoms to stress the need for HIV prevention and a strengthened national policy in providing comprehensive HIV and AIDS treatment, care and support.

The Condom Chain of Life festival will link 25,000 condoms and will be led by UNAIDS Special Representative Mechai Viravaidya, a national AIDS activist formerly known as “Mr. Condom” who was named a 2006 Time magazine hero for his groundbreaking HIV prevention efforts.

UNESCO, the Thai Red Cross, UNAIDS, Plan Thailand, Kasikorn Bank, the World Bank and the World Food Program, will join hands with People Living with HIV and AIDS, NGOs and other UN agencies to renew AIDS awareness at a time when public complacency, new HIV infections among vulnerable groups, and stigma and discrimination faced by people living with the virus, challenge sustained HIV prevention efforts. This is also an occasion to renew the pledge made by Thailand at the United Nations to move towards Universal Access to prevention, treatment, care and support services by 2010.
"Social acceptance of People Living With HIV and AIDS and access to quality care and treatment for the PLWHA community are important issues that need to be addressed every day. The fight against the HIV epidemic requires broad input and commitment from society as a whole," said TNP+ Chairperson, Wirat Purahong.

Award-winning Thai designer, Pisith Sirihamarat, will unveil his collection of street-wear fashions created from multi-colored condoms at 18.30 hours. Miss Thailand 2006, Lalana Kongtoranin and Miss Universe 2005, Miss Natalie Glebova, will judge the Guinness record, in public support for increased HIV and AIDS education and Pop star Pop Areeya will set an upbeat tone as the MC on the main stage.

The event begins at 12.00 hrs with the annual World AIDS Day parade organized by the Thai Red Cross, marching from Rama IV Road down Silom Road. The all-day festival in Lumpini Park, behind the Rama VI statue entrance, features stage performances by singer Todd “Thongdee” Lavelle, Thai classical music by Narongrit Tosa-nga (Khun-In, The Overture) the transgender singing group Venus Fly Trap, a Thai-language version of the Vagina Monologues and a fashion parade by the sex workers support organisation, Swing, from 16.30 hrs.

The Thai Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (TNP+) will receive their cash prize for the international Red Ribbon award announced during the 2006 International AIDS Conference in Toronto.

“World AIDS Day is a special time to re-commit all partners involved in the struggle against HIV and AIDS, to avoid satisfaction with past successes and focus on future challenges,” said Sheldon Shaeffer, Director of UNESCO Bangkok.

For more information, interviews, or story ideas, please contact:

**Thai / English language media contact person:**
Ms. Alida Pham a.pham@unescobkk.org ext. 342
Mobile: +66 89 783 6239

**English language media contact person:**
Johanna Rogers rogers.johanna@gmail.com
Tel: +66 2 255 5915
Mobile: +66 85 120 1963

**Programme Officer:**
Mr. Simon Baker s.baker@unescobkk.org ext. 113

**UNESCO Bangkok**
920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong,
Bangkok 10110, Thailand
Tel.: +66 2-391.0577 Fax: +66 2-391.0866
Website: [http://www.unescobkk.org/hivaids](http://www.unescobkk.org/hivaids)