

# Right to health: an open letter of solidarity with the people of Thailand

Friday 12 October 2007, by [Movements \(Brazil\)](#) (Date first published: 27 April 2007).

The Working Group on Intellectual Property (GTPI) from the Brazilian Network for the Integration of Peoples (REBRIP), together with the undersigned organizations, wish to express their solidarity with the people of Thailand, especially those who fight to guarantee the right to health and access to medicines.

Following the adoption of the TRIPS Agreement in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the patent system began to have severe impacts on access to medicine in various nations throughout the world, particularly in developing countries. Although large pharmaceutical companies have the legitimate right to compete in the world market, it is even more legitimate for a country to adopt policies that aim to increase its population's access to medicines. It is up to all sovereign nations to avoid the abuses of the international patent system, as it functions today, since it currently favours only private interests.

It is in this context that we show our support for the Thai government in its decision to issue compulsory licenses for medicines that are essential in order to guarantee the lives and the health of the population, such as the antiretroviral drugs Efavirenz (Merck) and Kaletra (Abbott), both used to treat HIV and Aids.

Not only does the government of Thailand's decision clearly contribute to the protection of public health, it is also in complete conformity with international trade rules, namely those of the WTO TRIPS Agreement and the WTO Doha Declaration on the TRIPS agreement and Public Health. Furthermore, it should be noted that developed countries, such as the United States and Canada, have used compulsory licensing on various occasions.

Finally, this measure is also compliant with the International System of Human Rights and, therefore, must be supported by international organisations, such as the World Health Organisation and the World Trade Organisation, as well as the governments of developing countries, including Brazil.

It is unacceptable that the multinational pharmaceutical firm Abbott is attempting to influence a country's health policies - in this case Thailand's - through the use of unilateral means of retaliation such as withdrawing registration applications of its new drugs.

This type of attitude brings to light the abuses that arise when trade agreements, like the TRIPS Agreement, allow corporations to establish absolute monopolies over the production and distribution of a given product. It also demonstrates the limits of the current patent system, which focuses exclusively on maximization of profit, often at the expense of people's lives.

It is time to unite all those who have always defended the use of TRIPS' flexibilities, which can be invoked in the name of protecting public health, as is the case of compulsory licenses. Together, we must publicly denounce Abbott's grave attitude that is harmful and disrespectful to the Thai people. To provide unlimited support for Thailand on this issue means to support the urgent need of all countries to put health before the profits of multinational pharmaceutical companies.

## **Signatures**

Grupo de Trabalho sobre Propriedade Intelectual/Rede Brasileira pela Integração dos Povos

AcciónGay/Sidaccion

Associação Beneficente N. Sr<sup>a</sup> da Conceição

Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS (ABIA)

Associação Brasileira de Gays, Lésbicas e Transgêneros (ABGLT)

Associação de Agricultura Orgânica

Associação de Prostitutas do Ceará (APROCE)

Associação do Assentamento de Queimadas

Associação Santos Dias

Associação de Travestis do Ceará

Asociación Atlacatl Vivo Positivo

Asociación de Ayuda al Seropositivo (ASEPO)

Asociación INPACVIH

BEMFAM (CE)

BEMFAM (RJ)

Casa de Apoio Sol Nascente

Casa Servo de Deus

Centro de Convivência e Creche Madre Regina

Centro de Estudos Aplicados e Juventude (CEAJ)

Centro de Estudos e Conservação da Natureza (CECNA)

Centro Feminista de Estudos e Assessoria (CFEMEA)

Conectas Direitos Humanos

Conselho Latino Americano e Caribenho de ONGs/AIDS (Laccaso)

CONVIDA-Conselho Nova Vida

Criola

Envolverde

Fábrica de Imagens

FASE - Solidariedade e Educação

Fórum de ONGs/AIDS do Ceará

Fórum de ONGs/AIDS do Espírito Santo

Fórum de ONGs/AIDS do Rio de Janeiro

Fórum de ONGs/AIDS do Estado de São Paulo

Fundação Heinrich Boll

Fundación Nimehuatzin

Gestos Soropositividade, Comunicação e Gênero

GRAIN

Grupo de Amor e Prevenção pela Vida- GAP-Vida

Grupo de Apoio às Comunidades Carentes (GACC)

Grupo de Apoio e Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA/CE)

Grupo de Apoio e Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA/DF)

Grupo de Apoio e Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA/MG)

Grupo de Apoio e Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA/PA)

Grupo de Apoio e Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA/RS)

Grupo de Apoio e Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA/SP)

Grupo de Apoio e Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA/SC)

Grupo de Incentivo a Vida (GIV/SP)

Grupo de Resistência Asa Branca (GRAB)

Grupo de Resistência Flor de Mandacaru (GRFM)

Grupo Gay de Iguatu

Grupo Pela Educação, Saúde e Cidadania (GES/SC)

Grupo Pela Vida/SP

Grupo Solidariedade é Vida

Grupo Tramas Feministas

Instituto Beneficente Viva a Vida (IBVV)

Instituto Búzios

Instituto de Defesa do Consumidor (IDEC)

Instituto de Juventude Contemporânea (IJC)

Instituto Vida Nova (SP)

LIBERTOS Comunicação

Liga Colombiana de Lucha Contra el SIDA

MORHAN

Movimento Arco-Íris da Sociedade Horizontal (MAISH)

Movimento Nacional das Cidadãs PositHIVas (MNCP+/Brasil)

Movimento Latinoamericano e Caribenho de Mulheres Vivendo com HIV/Aids/Brasil (MLCM+/Brasil).

Movimento Novo Sol

Núcleo de Estudos Interdisciplinares de Estudos sobre a Mulher (UFBA)

Núcleo de Integração pela Vida (NIV)

Organização Brasileira de Apoio Filantrópico (OBRAF)

Projeto Esperança - Apoio e Prevenção às DST/HIV/AIDS

Rede GAPA

Rede de Informações para o Terceiro Setor (RITS)

Rede Nacional de Pessoas Vivendo com HIV/AIDS (Núcleo Ceará)

Rede Nacional de Pessoas Vivendo com HIV/Aids Nordeste (RNP+ NE)

Rede de Solidariedade Positiva (RSP+)

Secretariado Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Caritas (Selacc)

Secretaria da RNP/BRASIL para Política Externa

Sempreviva Organização Feminista (SOF)

SOS Corpo - Instituto Feminista para a Democracia

Terra de Direitos

United Rede Internacional de Direitos Humanos (URIDH)

Via Libre