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PRESS RELEASE

Mekong Health Congress: « First international medical forum in the Lao P.D.R. »

Vientiane, December 9th 2009:

Almost 1,000 participants will meet in Vientiane from the 25th to 28th of January 2010 to take part to the first Mekong Health Congress organized by the Ministry of Health and the University of Health Sciences in the Lao PDR.

Main objectives are to update medical knowledge and practices, to share lesson learned as well as to promote collaboration and links between the Mekong countries.

The first Health Congress was born in 1998 in the framework of a French-Cambodia bilateral cooperation project. Twelve years later, the Lao Ministry of Health supported by a French project on Higher Medical Education in the Lao PDR is taking the initiative to spread the success of this national congress to the whole Greater Mekong Sub-region: Cambodia, China, Lao P.D.R., Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. Further to this first edition, the Lao P.D.R. will pass on the torch to one of its neighboring countries for the second edition of the Congress. Changing location from one country to another every year will expand the audience, as well as increase the volume and quality of the conferences.

A multidisciplinary medical forum opens to all health actors in the region:

Health professionals, teachers, students, working in the Mekong region as well as experts from various disciplines mainly coming from France but also from other Asian and European countries will participate to the Mekong Health Congress

Health education, the mainspring of development

The Mekong Health Congress aims to be an interdisciplinary forum in which health professionals can share and keep up-to-date knowledge and practices. The inception congress, will introduce the main organizations working in the health sector in Laos (Partnership session).

Then, during four days, nineteen sessions and workshops will take place in various medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, odontological and paramedical fields. Each session, coordinated by an international scientific committee will explain the issues and challenges of their discipline in the region. Causes, diagnostic-tools, responsibilities and recommendations on

the main pathologies such as tuberculosis, leprosy, epilepsy, will be discussed in depth during the sessions. Regional public health challenges such as child-mother mortality, malnutrition or vaccine policies will also be mentioned in different workshops.

During a full day, participants will focus on subjects related to « emerging infectious diseases and biodiversity ». This session will allow scientists from various disciplines to present the relations between environmental changes and emerging diseases. Among the topics debated: “Dengue and environmental changes in the Lao PDR” or “the impact of H1N1 pandemic in South East Asia ».

A specific session on « Pedagogy and IT » will be dedicated to medical specialists training in the region. This section will take place under the chairmanship of the Lao University of Health Sciences Rector and the president of CIDMEF (international conference of deans and French speaking medical faculties).

Finally for those engaged in climate change and environmental issues, the congress will propose a « tree plantation workshop ». This awareness action aims to reduce the level of greenhouse gases produced by international congress participants traveling to Lao PDR.

For more information :

Please visit the web site : www.medlaos.net (section « Congrès Mékong Santé »)

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