

THIRD UPDATE ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THAILAND

Dear WPATH2014 Attendees,

As we enter into the final stages of preparations for the upcoming meeting in Thailand we are pleased to announce that we have over 475 pre-registered attendees. We have recently been asked by a couple members for another update on the current political situation in Bangkok so we thought we would take this opportunity to share with the membership some details surrounding the current political demonstrations. We will continue to provide any further updates to all of you as needed.

As you are aware, there is a political conflict in Bangkok at the present time. A brief synopsis of the political conflict is that there is a power struggle between two political parties. Thailand is a democratic country. The majority party is the "red shirt" party, supporters of exiled prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The current prime minister of Thailand is the sister of exiled Thaksin Shinawatra. The yellow shirt party is unhappy with the current government in power and have conducted rallies to shutdown the government over the past two weeks by occupying government buildings and blocking the streets of downtown Bangkok. This has been mostly peaceful by the protesters of the government. The government has declared an emergency decree which allows the use of the military to aid police workers to prevent the shutdown of the government. The decree should restore order in the city in Bangkok until the democratic elections, to be held on February 2.

In general the process has been peaceful except for a few isolated incidents.

What does this mean for the WPATH attendee?

1. Keep in mind that our hotel is located several miles away from the protest area and is across the river bank. If traveling outside of the symposium area, we recommend that you plan ahead and check if there are any planned protests at your destination by checking with the hotel or local news.
2. We recommend that you avoid all protest areas, government buildings, and large crowds.
3. We recommend that you take into account that traffic situations may be congested and that you plan extra time when traveling to and from the airport and other locations in Bangkok.
4. We recommend that you register for your country's smart traveler program if available.

In the United States, you can sign up for free under this link <https://step.state.gov/step/>

The local committee and members of the executive committee are watching the situation closely. Follow our Facebook page for updates. <https://www.facebook.com/WPATH2014>

We are looking forward to seeing you at the 23rd WPATH Symposium in Bangkok!

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