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## Goal of Good Quality Medicines Advanced by New USP Agreement with Nine ASEAN Countries

**Rockville, Md., June 24, 2009** — Furthering its mission to improve the quality of medicines worldwide, the U.S. Pharmacopeial (USP) Convention has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with nine countries belonging to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In a drive to strengthen capacities and certification status of national drug quality control laboratories, officials from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Singapore, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand had formed an ASEAN Reference Substances Working Group (ARSWG) to focus on modern, international measurement standards for medicines in the region. The agreement with USP is the culmination of discussions that started in 2008 with the aim of improving the production and quality of ASEAN Reference Substances (ARS).

According to Roger L. Williams, M.D., chief executive officer of USP, “This agreement is a milestone in our shared goal of improving the quality of medicines in the region and around the world. We all recognize the importance of long-term strategies to ensure the availability of good quality medicines, and we believe that by working together that goal becomes more readily achievable.”

At an event to commemorate the signing of the MOU, Mr. Niphon Popattanachai, the deputy director-general of the department of medical sciences at the Thai Ministry of Public Health, said, “We have been working for many years to strengthen the pharmaceutical sector within ASEAN countries, and to become more self-reliant in training scientific staff within our drug quality control laboratories. Our partnership with USP—as well as with the World Health Organization (WHO), the British National Institute for Biological Standards and Control, the Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, and others—will offer valuable collaborative resources and scientific exchange.”

Areas of potential collaboration under the agreement include working toward WHO and ISO measurement standards for medicines; promoting ISO certification for ASEAN drug quality control laboratories; support for joint studies and scientist exchange programs; and mutual development of ways to combat counterfeit and substandard medicines.

For more information, visit [www.usp.org](http://www.usp.org) or email [mediarelations@usp.org](mailto:mediarelations@usp.org).

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### USP—Advancing Public Health Since 1820

The United States Pharmacopeial (USP) Convention is a scientific, non-profit, standards-setting organization that advances public health through public standards and related programs that help ensure the quality, safety, and benefit of medicines and foods. USP's standards are recognized and used worldwide. For more information about USP visit [www.usp.org](http://www.usp.org). **FY0949**

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