

Press Release: US PACOM Regional Forum on Drug Resistant Malaria among Military Populations

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA- 13 August 2014- The USPACOM Command Surgeon's office the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center and interagency partners held a regional meeting entitled the *USPACOM Regional Forum on Malaria Control and Elimination among Military Populations*. The forum brought together civilian and military health professionals from seven countries and multiple international organizations to discuss prevention, control, surveillance and management of malaria, particularly drug-resistant malaria, in the Greater Mekong subregion of Southeast Asia. This forum is part of ongoing efforts by USPACOM towards elimination of drug-resistant malaria through coordinated, cooperative, multisectoral approaches, linking civilian and military health systems.

USPACOM is working with the US Presidential Malaria Initiative (PMI) to address priority focus areas of the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria and efforts by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Health Organization to eliminate malaria. All three organizations were represented at the regional meeting and offered support for more direct partnerships within countries between civilian national malaria programs and military health systems. Rear Admiral Colin G. Chinn, the US Pacific Command Surgeon pointed out the importance for not only more direct work between military and civilian malaria efforts but also the need to better understand the burden of malaria among military troops, their mobility and the unique nature of military operations which can support malaria elimination efforts. RADM Chinn stated "Drug resistant malaria remains a significant health security threat to our partner countries but also to the greater global health community. The need right now is for a more comprehensive, multi-sector response to the threat and for more coordination across stakeholders and international organizations to support these response efforts."

Personal protective measures among military troops in high risk areas remains one of the primary strategies from malaria transmission. On day two, the delegates took part in a hands-on demonstration event at the US Embassy where Armed Forces Pest Management Board Director (AFPMB), CAPT Mark Beavers and HM2 Roderick Lagunaro of the Navy Environmental Preventative Medicine Unit-6 (NEPMU-6) instructed on techniques for insecticide treatment of uniforms and new repellants currently available for deploying troops and peacekeepers.

The Navy Medical Research Center-Asia (NMRC-Asia), the Navy Medical Research Unit-2 (NAMRU-2) Phnom Penh and partners from the US Army Pacific (USARPAC) all served in support of PACOM as technical support units for this meeting and will all play important roles in the future engagements through this regional forum. NAMRU-2 Phnom Penh conducts surveillance and research on drug-resistant malaria alongside partners from the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and the Ministry of Health through the National Center for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control (CNP).







Caption: RADM Colin Chinn, USPACOM Command Surgeon, provides opening remarks for the PACOM Regional Forum on Malaria Control and Elimination Among Military Populations. The forum brought together civilian and military health professionals from seven countries and multiple international organizations to discuss prevention, control, surveillance and management of malaria, particularly drug-resistant malaria, in the greater Mekong subregion of Southeast Asia. This forum is part of ongoing efforts by USPACOM towards elimination of drug-resistant malaria through coordinated, cooperative, multi-sectoral approaches, linking civilian and military health systems.

