

# 2004 JOINT MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE CURRENT POULTRY DISEASE SITUATION

*Adopted in Bangkok, Thailand on 28 January 2004*

We, the Agriculture and Health Ministers and senior officials of Cambodia, China, Republic of Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the United States, and Viet Nam, with the European Commission represented as an observer, met today in Bangkok, Thailand.

We exchanged views and shared experiences on our respective country practices and found that several measures and strategies can be usefully applied to prevent and contain the outbreak elsewhere. We addressed the current poultry disease situation, specifically the outbreak of avian influenza in the poultry population, and its impact on human health as well as on the economy.

We recognize that the outbreaks of the disease in affected countries do not only severely affect the poultry industry but also is a potential threat to human health, unless decisive actions are taken now. Containment requires closer cooperation among governments, communities and businesses through the appropriate regional and international organizations, and other mechanisms as necessary.

We advise careful monitoring and investigation to guard against possible human to human H5N1 transmission. Currently, such transmission has not been scientifically demonstrated and travel advisories currently are not called for.

We appreciate the progress made by affected countries in controlling the spread of the disease. These measures include rapid diagnosis and confirmation, rapid culling of infected and susceptible poultry populations, vaccination of poultry, quarantine of infected areas, intensified surveillance, movement control, epidemiological investigation and hospitalization and monitoring of affected patients.

Recognizing the potential serious impact of Avian Influenza on global public health, livestock production, trade and economic development, we decide to:

- Commit ourselves to more stringent surveillance and effective response systems, improved research and development capabilities, and sharing of information and technology;
- Intensify national, regional and international efforts to tackle the outbreak of this disease and future similar threats;
- Implement domestic measures to control avian influenza having regard to the recommendations of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);
- Work closely with OIE to strengthen guidelines on reporting and surveillance systems;
- Promote rapid, transparent, and accurate exchange of scientific information to provide early warning of potential outbreaks, and consider to create a regional veterinary surveillance network and to link it with existing human health surveillance mechanisms, including the APEC Task Force on Health, ASEAN Ministers' Health Special Meeting in Kuala Lumpur and ASEAN Heads of States Meeting on SARS in Bangkok, respectively;

- Strengthen cooperation with regional and international organizations on joint research and development initiatives to reduce the hazards of epizootic outbreaks on human health, share best practices, devise counter-measures, and develop effective, low-cost diagnostic test kits, vaccination and anti-viral drugs;
- Call for assistance and exchange of expertise to assist affected countries to enhance their epidemiological and laboratory capacity for prompt detection, monitoring, surveillance and controlling of the disease;
- Formulate effective outreach and communication strategies to promote transparency and better public understanding of the extent and nature of the disease.
- Investigate options for designing more bio-security developments of the poultry sector for both small scale and commercial production.

We thank the representatives of the OIE, WHO, and FAO and other resource persons for their valuable contributions to control the poultry disease outbreak and protect international public health. We thank the Royal Thai Government for convening this meeting and for its warm hospitality.