

Report from Empower Thailand to Aidsfonds
Amsterdam Aids2018
6th August 2018

In Thailand and many other countries the police continue to use condoms as evidence of the crime of prostitution. This has seriously negative on sex worker's access to safe work, and also stigmatizes condoms and condoms use. The situation is well known and documented in the HIV community. However the UN family and public health have not always been actively working to end the practice. Our intervention called for key agencies (UNAIDS and Global Fund) to take a more pro-active stance on decriminalization and ending the practice of using "condoms as evidence"

In Empower's mobile performance sex workers dressed as police "stop, search and arrest" delegates found to be carrying condoms. It is a friendly light-hearted interaction that helps highlight the serious need to end the practice and opens discussion on the UNAIDS recommendation to decriminalize prostitution in order to effectively address HIV/Aids.

During the conference the Empower Condom Police made regular patrols of all areas of the conference. They were accompanied by the official "condom police" photographers from the English Collective of Prostitutes (ECP) UK



In total 160 delegates were arrested and each arrest was witnessed by at least 20 people.



The arrests included key people such as Peter Sands, Executive Director, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Peter Sands @PeterASands Twitter Got "arrested" by activists protesting against police using possession of condoms as evidence against sex workers. Completely agree: absurd and wrong that holding one the simplest and best tools of health protection can be grounds for arrest #AIDS2018

He also told others his arrest was the highlight of the conference for him

There is also a video clip taken of his arrest. <http://coyoteri.org/wp/sesta-fosta-death-aids2018/>

World Health Organization representatives also were among those arrested and many more...





In addition Empower Condom Police raided booths/networking zones and issued closure notices on 8 places. In the process they seized 1,012 condoms.

Part of the intervention included collecting signatures supporting a “Subpoena” calling for UNAIDS and Global Fund to produce evidence of their work to date. In all the Subpoena collected 220 signatories including VIP Charlize Theron.



The Subpoena was served on Kate Thomson Director of Community, Rights and Gender Department, Global Fund and Eamon Murphy, Director of the UNAIDS Asia and the Pacific Region on the main stage of the Global Village, Thurs 26 July. Jules Kim CEO of Scarlet Alliance Australia read the Subpoena to an audience of around 50 people.



Hundreds of photos were taken by our sister organization ECP, many delegates and lots of media. UNAIDS also interviewed Empower and this will be featured on their website report on the IAC.

To date Empower intervention has been featured in the following media:

Aids2018 Highlights June 23rd (appears at 1:28 minute)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=834qaLwajLU>

Dutch media

<https://nos.nl/uitzending/nos-journaal>

BBC World London UK (Thai)

<https://www.bbc.com/thai/thailand-45008968>

Mega Magazine New Zealand

https://mega.nz/#F!zno30AoC!Ewy5pEKNvPw_he4NMS-Xwg

English Collective of Prostitutes Twitter and facebook

<https://twitter.com/ProstitutesColl/status/1022384645697150976>

<https://twitter.com/ProstitutesColl/status/1022384642979254272>

SWARM Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BlnDSBxHy7d/>

COYOTE USA

<http://coyoteri.org/wp/sesta-fosta-death-aids2018/>

***We'd like to thank Linda and all
friends who joined us***

***The Power We Share
the Power We Have***

Empower Foundation

