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## **CHINA AIDS LAW CONFERENCE CANCELED**

Beijing, China—July 28, 2007—An international conference on AIDS and law to be held in China this week has been canceled due to unforeseen circumstances, Asia Catalyst said today.

The conference, co-organized by New York-based Asia Catalyst [亚洲促进会] and Beijing-based China Orchid AIDS Projects [东珍], would have brought together fifty international and domestic experts to discuss Chinese and international AIDS law.

The conference is part of plans between the two groups to establish a Chinese legal aid center that will handle impact litigation on the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS.

“While we deeply regret that the meeting cannot take place, our work continues,” said Meg Davis, founder and director of Asia Catalyst. “We still seek to cooperate with our colleagues in China and will support them in their efforts to develop the legal system.”

Mark Heywood, executive director of the AIDS Law Project in South Africa and chairperson of the UNAIDS Global Reference Group on HIV and Human Rights, was to deliver the meeting’s keynote address. Experts on AIDS and the law from India, the U.S., Canada, and Thailand were scheduled to speak on such topics as discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS, blood safety, the rights of women and girls, and the practical challenges of setting up an AIDS law center.

“International experience has shown that protecting legal rights is key to any successful fight against AIDS,” Davis said. “China has passed laws protecting those rights, and people with AIDS need assistance in order to exercise them.”

The conference was to have been held at the Zhujiang Hotel in Guangzhou from August 2-3, 2007.

Asia Catalyst is a U.S.-based nonprofit that collaborates with activists in Asia to inspire, create, and launch innovative, self-sustaining programs that advance human rights, social justice and environmental protection. For more information, see [www.asiacatalyst.org](http://www.asiacatalyst.org).