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Sumitomo Chemical Expands Annual Production Capacity for its Olyset® Net to 60 Million Nets

Sumitomo Chemical has been continually expanding production capacity in Tanzania, Vietnam and China for its Olyset® Net, an anti-malarial mosquito net with an insecticide incorporated into its netting fibers. The Company recently expanded capacity of a contract manufacturer in Vietnam to 17.5 million nets by increasing further 5.5 million nets, and going forward will improve productivity at its manufacturing bases to reach a total global capacity of 60 million Olyset® Nets in the middle of 2010 with 29 million nets in Tanzania, 19 million nets in Vietnam, and 12 million nets in China.

Currently, 200-300 million people worldwide become infected with malaria every year and over one million of them die from the disease. Malaria is one of the causes of poverty, and in Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, where 90% of malaria cases occur, malaria prevention is essential. The Olyset® Net developed by Sumitomo Chemical is a highly durable and long-lasting mosquito net that retains its efficacy for over 5 years even with repeated washing. It is an economical and effective way of protecting people from the mosquitoes that transmit malaria, and its use is therefore recommended by the WHO.

The distribution of insecticidal mosquito nets is considered an effective means of preventing the spread of malaria, which is one of the Millennium Development Goals* put forth by the UN. According to the World Malaria Report 2009 published by the WHO, the percentage of households throughout Africa using at least one insecticidal mosquito net rose from 17% in 2006 to 31% in 2008. In addition, by 2008, anti-malarial mosquito nets had spread to over 50% of homes in 13 African countries. In countries where anti-malarial mosquito nets and medicines have been distributed widely, instances have been reported of fatalities from malaria decreasing by over 50% within several years. Nevertheless, in Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia, countries with comparatively large populations where mosquito net use is relatively low, it is necessary to further step up malaria prevention activities.

Sumitomo Chemical will continue to cooperate with various international organizations in its efforts to actively support malaria prevention initiatives.

* Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

A series of 8 development targets addressing issues such as poverty, education, the environment and human rights to be achieved by 2015 based on the UN's Millennium Development Declaration adopted in September 2000.