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Sylvie Bénéfice closing address at the Rijeka conference

(14 November 2008)

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, I have the privilege to conclude this conference, which was intense and fruitful, as expected, thus I would like to declare this conference now closed.
This conference organised for the 5th anniversary of the Croatian Agency of Medicinal Products and Medical Devices, associated celebration and pre-accession activities, has built a milestone towards cooperation in the regulatory field for medicines.

The purpose of this conference was:

- To give an overview of the EU legislation governing the regulation of medicinal products
- To provide information on the practical application of the *Acquis Communautaire* and legal aspects of its implementation
- to identify the harmonisation of the Croatian Pharmaceutical Regulation with the current EU legislation.
- to discuss problems that may be encountered with regard to moving towards accession, and in anticipation of membership of the European Union
- and to establish a dialogue with a view to informing the full cross-section of stakeholders.

I think that the conference achieved its objectives and contributed to reinforcing contacts and relationships between the EMEA and the ALMP, thus facilitating future collaboration.
In addition, I would like to highlight that this conference was a valuable opportunity for us, working together as partners, to make the necessary preparations for the smooth integration of Croatia into the EU regulatory environment for pharmaceuticals.

Indeed, the Regulatory network system is based on pooling knowledge and resources, sharing experiences, exchanging information and working together with shared objectives.

In the field of medicines, we have achieved many good things by acting together as equal partners in a European medicines network that is based on cooperation, friendship and, above all, a common goal: to offer Europe the safest, most effective and highest-quality medicines we possibly can.

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With the European Union set to expand again in the years ahead, we have worked together during this conference to make sure we will be ready to welcome Croatia as an equal partner on the day of its accession.

It remains for me now to thank you all, on behalf of the EMEA, for having attended and for having contributed to the success of this conference.

In particular, I would like to thank the Croatian authorities for their contribution and cooperation on organising and hosting this event and for their warm and kind hospaitality.

We are also very grateful to:

- the representatives of the European Commission for their support and participation and for making finances available through the IPA programme
- and to all speakers for their valuable contributions, absolutely essential for ensuring a great success.

The number of participants and the enthusiasm of your engagement is a testimony to the commitment on all sides towards creating a strong foundation for cooperation between Croatia and the EU in the regulatory field for medicines.

I would like to thank also the representatives of the National Competent Authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, for their participation in this conference, thus reinforcing the relationships and the collaboration between the Candidate Countries and the Potential Candidate Countries, in line with the objectives of the new Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance programme IPA, which should be launched in the next few months.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to both organisation teams from the EMEA and from the ALMP, who have worked so hard to organise and run this event and who have done an excellent job.

We look forward to working with you again in the future, and hope for further opportunities to build on the achievements of these last two days.

Until then, I thank you again for your participation, and wish you all a safe trip home.
Thank you.