European Medicines Agency
Celebrating ten years – 1995 – 2005

"A Scientific Perspective on the Future of Medicines"

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Fédération Européenne d'Associations et d'Industries Pharmaceutiques

EMEA – 10th Anniversary
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It is my pleasure to offer a few remarks on this occasion on behalf of the research-based industry.

Ten years ago there was a mixture of feelings in the industry. This ranged from positive but nervous anticipation of the functioning of the new agency to fear of the unknown!

But that period of uncertainty is now well behind us with a high level of confidence in the functioning of the EMEA.

This is witnessed by the constant flow of applications from companies and the consistently positive outcome of the annual performance review carried out between EMEA and EFPIA.

The industry contribution to society is twofold – economic and health. Neither of these is possible without innovation and the application of life science advances. But as any company could testify, this is not easy – its lengthy, costly and risky. The "cycle of innovation" needs four main policy drivers:

- Sound intellectual property rights
- A solid and science based regulatory system
- Strong science base
- Fair and stable market which rewards innovation

Europe can be rightfully proud of the creation of the EMEA – a policy vision made reality by the European Institutions and the Member States.

Similarly Europe's intellectual property regime puts us in a reasonable position globally. Our science base is strong but perhaps lacks "critical mass". Europe's market place remains the major challenge – 25 fragmented markets, heavy cost containment measures and poor reward for innovation characterise the EU scene.

Clearly this leads to a direct loss to Europe's research potential and also two other effects: wasteful parallel trade and significant patient access delays.

But none of this distracts from the success of the EMEA. Its primary public health function is established and recognised and it has a Road Map for its future evolution. Among other things this should help ensure that regulatory structures keep pace with scientific developments. Its existence also contributes to the Lisbon goals by providing a sound regulatory base for companies.

With vision, leadership and competence Europe can get it right.

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