29 May 2012, Strasbourg, France

BREAKING NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL PHARMACOPOEIA AUTHORITIES ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the National Pharmacopoeia Authorities of the European Pharmacopoeia member states took place in Bern (Switzerland) on 14 to 15 May 2012. The meeting, a unique platform for the open exchange of information and discussions between the secretariats of national pharmacopoeia authorities and the European Pharmacopoeia, was hosted by Swissmedic, the Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products. Twenty-one of the thirty-six member states of the *Convention on the elaboration of a European Pharmacopoeia* participated in this event.

Topics discussed included:

- the mid- and long-term strategy of the European Pharmacopoeia in the field of biological and chemically-defined products.
- follow-up to the actions proposed and decided upon following the conference "European Formulary on Paediatric Formulations" organised by the EDQM in November 2011. Representatives of European competent authorities including the EMA, the Hospital Pharmacy Association and EuPFI attended this workshop. Its objective was to discuss the benefits of a potential harmonised European Formulary for Paediatric Formulations, together with its content and requirements. The NPAs greatly welcomed and fully supported the proposal to elaborate such a European Formulary.
- the potential need for further action on the *Second identification testing* section in individual monographs as regards its scope, requirements and maintenance.

The annual meeting also provided an opportunity for National Pharmacopoeia Authorities to receive more information and to discuss the holistic approach taken by the Council of Europe and its EDQM in combatting falsified/counterfeit medical products and similar crimes posing a risk to public health (through the Medicrime Convention, the eTACT project, OMCL activities and multi-sectorial training).

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.

Note for the Editor: Further information is available on the internet site: http://www.edqm.eu. The EDQM is a leading organisation that protects public health by enabling development, supporting implementation, and monitoring the application of quality standards for safe medicines and their safe use. Our standards are recognised as a scientific benchmark world-wide. The European Pharmacopeia[1] is legally-binding in European Member States. Similarly, the EDQM develops guidance and standards in the areas of blood transfusion, organ transplantation and consumer health issues.

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[1]There are currently thirty-seven members of the European Pharmacopoeia Commission: *Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom and the European Union* and twenty-five observers: *The World Health Organisation (WHO); 6 member states of the Council of Europe: Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine; 18 other countries in the world: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Israel, Madagascar, Malaysia, Morocco, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Guinea, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Singapore, Senegal, Syria, Tunisia, United States of America*.