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News Release

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 hrs CET, 7 APRIL 2011

IFPMA Supports WHO World Health Day: New Efforts Needed to Combat Anti-Microbial Resistance

Geneva, 7 April 2011 – The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA) today gives its support to the 2011 WHO World Health Day, which this year takes as its theme Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and raises awareness of the problem of antibiotics losing their effectiveness over time as bacteria naturally evolve and mutate to become resistant to drug treatments.

In support of World Health Day, the IFPMA has today released its AMR Position Paper (see Annex). This highlights two of the main causes of the growth of AMR – the widespread use of antibiotics and time-consuming diagnostic tools; discusses the scientific, regulatory and financial factors that have led to an inadequate supply of new treatments; and calls for new approaches to greater incentivize companies to develop medicines in this area and to ensure the responsible prescribing and use of antibiotics.

IFPMA President and Astra Zeneca CEO David Brennan commented:

“No single party alone can overcome the challenge of AMR: a multi-stakeholder approach is needed, one that includes leaders in government, science, economics, public policy, and philanthropy to help come up with creative solutions. The R&D-based pharmaceutical industry recognizes the role it has to play in this area of public health, but seeks support from other stakeholders in creating an environment that ensures new antibiotics continue to be developed. Only through the development of new strategies and new collaborations are we going to tackle the problem of anti-microbial resistance.”

WHO has today called on governments and stakeholders to implement the policies and practices needed to prevent and counter the emergence of highly resistant infections, and also to provide appropriate care to those seriously affected by these microbes. The R&D-based pharmaceutical industry echoes that call and commits to play its part in addressing the challenge of AMR. Specifically, the IFPMA and its member companies and associations pledge the following:

1. Continue our investment in R&D programs dedicated to the development of new antibacterial agents.
2. Work in partnership towards a responsible global approach with UN Agencies (principally WHO), national governments, healthcare providers, NGOs and other stakeholders in the areas of education, prevention, innovation, access, financing and capacity-building initiatives.
3. Support the WHO's work to advise on the appropriate use of these vital medicines.

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About the IFPMA:

The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations is the global non-profit NGO representing the research-based pharmaceutical industry, including the biotech and vaccine sectors. Its members comprise 26 leading international companies and 45 national and regional industry associations covering low, middle and high income countries. The industry's R&D pipeline contains hundreds of new medicines and vaccines being developed to address global disease threats, including cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and malaria. The IFPMA Clinical Trials Portal (www.ifpma.org/ClinicalTrials), the IFPMA's Ethical Promotion online resource (www.ifpma.org/EthicalPromotion/) and its Developing World Health Partnerships Directory (www.ifpma.org/HealthPartnerships) help make the industry's activities more transparent. The IFPMA supports a wide range of WHO technical activities, notably those relating to medicine efficacy, quality and safety. It also provides the secretariat for the International Conference on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH).

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