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Note for the Editors: further information is available on the internet site: www.edqm.eu

LAUNCH OF A 3 YEAR PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION ACTIVITIES IN THE BLACK SEA AREA 1-2 JULY 2011, CHISINAU, MOLDOVA

The development of organ transplantation in the countries of the Black Sea Area (BSA) dates back to the late 1970s when kidney transplants from non-heart beating donors (NHBD) were mainly performed. However, from the early 1990s, transplantation activities began to decline and, in some countries, even ceased.

Promoting and improving the organisation of organ donation and transplantation at a European level is a real concern and the subject of much effort by the Council of Europe since 1987. Over the last few years, the Council of Europe has implemented several projects, mainly directed towards the development of effective legislative frameworks and the establishment of national transplant authorities and programmes.

Based on recommendations and the experience gained from these projects, the Council of Europe has just launched a 3 year collaborative project entitled 'Development of the activities related to donation and transplantation of organs, tissues and cells: Cooperation between countries of the Black Sea Area'. This project aims to help in the development of organ donation and transplantation programmes through close co-operation between national health organisations and relevant stakeholders. The intention is to create a permanent network of national experts that will allow the participating countries to co-ordinate efforts and pool resources.

The Council of Europe Member states in the BSA (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine) will, through this project, start a long term regional cooperation in order to develop and strengthen activities and programmes related to the donation and transplantation of organs, tissues and cells, with the help and support from the European Committee on Organ Transplantation (CD-P-TO) and a number of experts.

The EDQM, Council of Europe, is determined to provide the necessary support to the national authorities involved in this project.

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Note for the Editor: 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 Pharmacopoeia 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.

The work of the Council of Europe in the area of organ transplantation started in the 1950's. It has contributed actively to the implementation of high standards for the protection of public health and for the promotion of human rights and dignity. Priority is given in the work programme not only to the publication of the *Guide to Safety and Quality Assurance for the Transplantation of Organs, Tissues and Cells*, but also to the publication of a booklet on regulatory and technical matters related to living donor transplantation, a Transplant Newsletter giving international figures on organ donation, and to assist member states in improving their organ transplantation services whilst promoting the principle of voluntary non-remunerated donations. Reports and organ transplantation recommendations from the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe are also elaborated and available on the EDQM website.

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