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Note for the Editors

The European Pharmacopoeia and the EDQM (Direction of the Council of Europe notably in charge of the secretariat of the European Pharmacopoeia) have a mission to protect and promote public and animal health, through the elaboration of quality standards of medicines for human and veterinary use.

Medicines need to be safe, effective and of good quality in order to produce the expected therapeutic effect. The EDQM works closely with its international and European partners to strengthen measures in order to ensure that substandard or counterfeit medicines do not reach the marketplace.

The EDQM's networks collaborate on a daily basis with all the authorities involved in the standardisation, regulation and control of medicines for human and veterinary use.

Since December 2006, the EDQM took over activities of the Council of Europe in the domains of blood transfusion and organ transplantation.

REPUBLIC OF BELARUS BECOMES OBSERVER TO THE EUROPEAN PHARMACOPOEIA COMMISSION

The Republic of Belarus requested and obtained observer status by the European Pharmacopoeia Commission. The decision was voted unanimously by the delegates from the member countries and the European Union, during the November session of the Commission and allows collaborations to develop with the authorities of this country.

The Republic of Belarus is keen to participate in the work of the European Pharmacopoeia and to share information and experiences to ensure the quality control of medicines and protect public health in its country.

There are currently thirty-seven members¹ of the European Pharmacopoeia Commission and twenty observers².

The Convention on the Elaboration of a European Pharmacopoeia is an international Convention drafted by the Council of Europe in 1964. It has the objective of progressively elaborating in Europe a pharmacopoeia that is common to all the member states and which defines a single set of specifications that will become the official standards applicable within these countries for active substances and excipients used in medicines; the European Pharmacopoeia also describes test methods to ensure the quality of these medicines.

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 46 member states.

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1. 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.

2. The World Health Organisation (WHO); 4 member states of the Council of Europe: Albania, Georgia, Russian Federation and Ukraine; 15 other countries in the world: Algeria, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Israel, Madagascar, Malaysia, Morocco, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan, Senegal, Syria, Tunisia, United States of America.