Global Advisory Panel (GAP) on Corporate Governance and Risk Management of Blood Services in Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

20 February 2013

Secretary of the Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines
World Health Organisation
Office of the EML Secretariat
Medicine Access and Rational Use (MAR)
Department of Essential Medicines and Health Products
20 Avenue Appia
CH-1211 Geneva 27

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing on behalf of the following members of the Global Advisory Panel (GAP) on Corporate Governance and Risk Management of Blood Services in Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies - in regard to the AABB application for the inclusion of Whole Blood and Red Blood Cells on the WHO Model Essential Medicines List and the WHO Model Essential Medicines List for children.

- Australian Red Cross Blood Service
- Austrian Red Cross Blood Service
- Belgian Red Cross Blood Service
- Finnish Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service
- German Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service
- Hondurus Red Cross National Blood Centre
- Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service
- Israeli Magen David Adom
- Japanese Red Cross Society Blood Service
- Blood Transfusion Service, Swiss Red Cross
- Thailand National Blood Centre

GAP was established in 2001 by the International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent (IFRC) to provide technical advice to National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and their affiliated blood services, in matters concerning corporate governance and risk management. GAP is comprised of a global panel of experts in Blood Program management which actively supports the IFRC in the establishment of safe and sustainable blood programs based on the principle of voluntary, non remunerated blood donors.

While supportive of its overall intent to recognise the essential nature of blood in health care and to increase global access to and availability of safe blood, these National Society blood services would like to ask to postpone the decision about submitting for inclusion Whole Blood and Red Blood Cells on the WHO Essential Medicines List.
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This will allow for a more comprehensive international consultation to be undertaken by the global health and blood community, particularly including developing countries, to facilitate a clear and shared global view on the implications of adding blood to the WHO EML and of what WHO expects from countries when they accept blood to be 'essential'. GAP would be happy to be involved in any further discussion on this topic, and will take action to provide you with as soon as possible with our recommendations.

Yours sincerely

Prof. Dr. Philippe Vandekerckhove

GAP President
(CEO, Belgian Red Cross Blood Service- Flanders)