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PRESS RELEASE

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INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PHARMACEUTICAL TRAINING PROGRAM LAUNCHES IN ARMENIA

Yerevan, Armenia – An internationally-recognized GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) Standards Training and Training of Trainers program for Armenia's pharmaceutical industry will launch on May 20, 2009 through the joint initiative of the USAID-funded Competitive Armenian Private Sector (CAPS) project, the Ministry of Health, Scientific Center for Drug and Medical Technology Expertise, Yerevan State Medical University and the newly established GXP Centre of Excellence. Facilitated by international experts, the program aims to standardize knowledge of EU GMP requirements amongst a core group of pharmaceutical cluster representatives, as well as strengthen the capacity of academic institutions to provide basic but relevant training in GMP.

The Armenian Pharmaceutical Industry is making dramatic steps toward the introduction of GMP, a quality standard that most countries in the world rely on today to import and export medicines. Assessments undertaken amongst Armenian pharmaceutical companies, however, have revealed that GMP knowledge appears to be deficient in a number of areas. "Compliance to international standards is crucial for the Armenian pharmaceutical industry and GMP implementation will largely improve the competitiveness of the sector as a whole", said Tatul Hakobyan, RA Deputy Minister of Health, noting that pharmaceutical producers will be able to compete more effectively with imported products and will be able to export to a wider range of countries.

The six-day comprehensive advanced-level training program is specially designed to address the abovementioned issues and is targeted at pharmaceutical production company quality assurance managers, in-company trainers, technical managers, and senior supervisors. After studying the specific problems and needs of the Armenian Pharmaceutical Sector, the consultants have developed a GMP Training course based on the World Health Organization GMP basic and supplementary training modules, and specifically tailored toward EU nuances and requirements for use in Armenia. An additional course will assist trainees to become GMP trainers, and those who successfully complete the Advanced GMP and Training of Trainers courses will be eligible to provide training through the GXP Center of Excellence, that has been established by the Union of Medicine Producers and Importers through CAPS assistance. The GXP Center of Excellence will deliver certified trainings and assist companies to fulfill their continuous training needs.

"The world has been led by GMP standards for more than 30 years. GMP implementation is a prerequisite for Armenian export growth and to enter the global market, and all Armenian producers understand the importance of proper technical equipment and well-educated personnel", Frans Stobbelaar, CAPS Pharmaceutical Consultant said, adding that the establishment of a specialized training center will provide a long-term solution to staff training needs.

The official launch of the training course will take place on Wednesday May 20, 2009, 10:00am at Yerevan State Medical University's Meduni Hotel (10 Davit Anghaght Street, Yerevan).

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The USAID-funded Competitive Armenian Private Sector (CAPS) Project provides technical assistance to the Armenian private sector to help them better compete nationally, regionally and internationally. CAPS is currently working with the growing Armenian information technology, tourism, pharmaceuticals and the engineering services clusters to identify globally competitive products and services, and to build robust companies around those products and services. CAPS technical assistance takes many forms and includes: firm level consulting, business association capacity building, policy research, public education, work force training and development of public / private initiatives.

COMPETITIVE ARMENIAN PRIVATE SECTOR PROJECT (CAPS)

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