

## **IFAH message to Bamako conference: More research needed to combat Avian Influenza**

**Brussels, 13 December 2006: Peter Jones, the Executive Director of IFAH, called for more research in animal medicines to combat Avian Influenza at the IV International Conference on Avian Influenza in Bamako, Mali. He proposed an international stakeholder alliance to develop new medicines to combat Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and the need for private-public partnerships to advance vaccine research, with the European Technology Platform for Global Animal Health (ETPGAH) as a model.**

The IV International Conference on Avian Influenza was held the 6-8 December 2006 in Bamako and gathered political decision-makers as well as leading animal and human health experts and focused on the provision of funds for activities to combat HPAI, particularly in Africa.

Peter Jones said “I am glad that the international community continues to focus on HPAI and especially that it has chosen Africa to host the event. Animal health often gets less attention than human health and rarely is in the political limelight. Avian Influenza has changed this perception, and more political decision-makers are now aware of how integral the link is between good animal health and good human health.”

He referred to the European Technology Platform for Global Animal Health (ETPGAH) as a model to set an ambitious research agenda for animal medicines. The ETPGAH is an alliance of representatives from the animal health industry, public research institutions, farmers, veterinarians, regulatory authorities at the national and European level, international organisations as well as animal welfare groups. The European Commission supports the initiative.

The primary focus of the platform is the development of vaccines and diagnostic tests for major animal diseases of major economic consequences world-wide, working in partnership with countries outside the EU and with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

“At the Technology Platform we have learned that forging a wide alliance of stakeholders is key to making significant progress to advance animal health. We also believe that such a broad coalition with committed resources is not only possible but necessary to ensure that we win the battle against HPAI and other zoonoses on the global level.” Peter Jones said.

The Executive Director of IFAH suggested establishing a special task force including international organisations and relevant stakeholders to develop a vision and a strategic research agenda for HPAI at the international level. He also emphasised the need to set up private-public partnerships to develop new medicines for AI with a focus on developing countries.

Both the IFAH global position and the background document on Avian Influenza are available on: [http://www.ifahsec.org/media\\_room/position\\_papers.htm](http://www.ifahsec.org/media_room/position_papers.htm)

Information on the European Technology Platform for Global Animal Health can be found on: <http://www.ifahsec.org/Europe/EUPlatform/Platform.htm>

#### **Note to Editors:**

IFAH, the International Federation for Animal Health, is the organisation representing manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in both developed and developing countries across five continents.

Its goal is to promote a harmonised, science-based regulatory and trade framework, and marketplace environment that supports an animal health industry which is economically viable and innovation driven, contributing to a healthy and safe food supply as well as a high level of animal health and welfare.

For further information on IFAH, please visit <http://www.ifahsec.org>.

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