

Notes for Remarks by

Phil Blake, Chair  
*Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D)*

at

Official Opening of HPIC's Distribution Centre

Toronto, Ontario

February 16, 2007

**Check against delivery**

Thank you, Merci à vous, Thank you Richard Boileau for that kind introduction and thank you John Kelsall and everyone involved in hosting this exciting event today.

We are so pleased that the Prime Minister will be with us shortly to recognize the great work that Health Partners International of Canada is doing with all its partners. It shows the Government of Canada's commitment to improving health in the developing world.

Clearly, HPIC's work with all its partners is a shining example of what can be accomplished by working together to bring "hope and healing" to the world's most vulnerable people.

I can tell you that for *Canada's Research Based Pharmaceutical Companies*, this place feels like home. Just three months ago, we were in this very building to sign a partnership agreement with our friends at HPIC.

This builds on a relationship which began 17 years ago and has grown ever since.

Our member companies contributed toward the first shipment of humanitarian relief by Health Partners International back in 1990. Since then, we have provided 145 million dollars in donated medicines to this excellent organization for distribution in nearly 120 countries.

And our commitment extends to a personal level.

I know that some of the employees of our member companies have been to places like Malawi in Africa to personally deliver Physician Travel Packs to children orphaned because of AIDS and other diseases. One father and daughter team personally brought enough travel packs to treat 10,000 children.

We are not just fighting against disease in the developing world. We are fighting against poverty and insecurity. Medicines alone won't do it.

We must also build better health care systems, hospitals and clinics, train doctors and provide access to clean water and disease prevention programs. Globally, innovative pharmaceutical companies are working with more than 25 international agencies and have provided the equivalent of health interventions for 570 million people in developing countries since 2000.

International pharmaceutical manufactures are partnering with governments including Canada to develop a vaccine against pneumococcal diseases which kill up to 1 million children each year. This initiative has the potential to save the lives of hundreds of thousands if not millions of children.

The work that HPIC does creates hope for a better tomorrow in places like Afghanistan and Africa where often it appears that there is no hope.

HPIC does an extraordinary job in facilitating and coordinating its missions and ensuring that the right health care products get to the people who need it most as quickly as possible. For those people, access to these products is often a matter of life and death.

This HPIC partnership is uniquely Canadian. Because as Canadians, we see people in need, people who are suffering and we find a way to help. At Rx&D, we are committed to the principles of innovation and compassion. Through our relationship with HPIC, we are dedicated to finding innovative ways to improve health and cure disease throughout the world.

I challenge each and every one of us in this room to do whatever we can to support Health Partners International of Canada in its “hope and healing” missions around the world.

Thank you

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