

## News release

11 September 2007

The president of Eurolab, Jean-Luc Laurent, and the director of JRC-IRMM, Alejandro Herrero, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Co-operation among testing laboratories is key for the harmonisation of test methods and, eventually, to achieving general acceptance of test results. Optimising the use of resources is also one of the corner stones of the strategy of Eurolab, the European Federation of National Associations of Measurement, Testing and Analytical Laboratories and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission.

The representatives of the two organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding on September 11, 2007 at the JRC Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM), in Geel, Belgium. The MoU establishes principles and guidelines of their cooperation. The two organisations intend to:

- ensure information exchange in relevant matters e.g. between the JRC's Community Reference Laboratories and the Eurolab community
- coordinate contents and programming of workshops and seminars of mutual interest
- exchange views and, wherever possible, find consensus positions on policy matters of interest to the European trade and innovation community, such as pre-standardisation research activities or quality assurance standards.
- coordinate participation in European and international fora for standardisation and conformity assessment of measurements, e.g., European Accreditation, the international and European organisations for standardisation CEN and ISO.

The more specific technical topics concern cooperation in organising comparative testing schemes to assess competencies of measurement laboratories, establishing reference values or reference materials for those campaigns, and promoting the use of reference materials like the European Reference Materials (ERM<sup>®</sup>s) together. Training of staff and laboratory practitioners in very specific technical matters related to measurements is also included.

Both Mr Laurent and Mr Herrero stressed that this cooperation strengthens the roles Eurolab and IRMM play in harmonising the European measurement system. 'The concept of mutual recognition for instance, is very important for the society as it has economical implications in trade' says Mr Herrero.

**About IRMM:**

The institute for reference materials and measurements (IRMM) is one of the seven institutes of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) a Directorate-General of the European Commission.

It was founded in 1957 under the Treaties of Rome and started operation in 1960 under the name of the Central Bureau for Nuclear Measurements (CBNM). In 1993 it was renamed to reflect the new mission of the institute, which covers a wide range of measurement problems from food safety to environmental pollution.

Today IRMM is one of the world's leading reference material producers, expert adviser in food safety and bioanalysis as well as a valued provider of reference measurement data.

IRMM works in close collaboration with the other institutes of the JRC, and with research institutes, universities and international organisations worldwide and is an international affiliate member of EUROLAB.

**About EUROLAB**

Eurolab was created in Brussels on April 27, 1990 on the basis of a memorandum of understanding, signed by delegations representing the private and public laboratories of 17 out of the 19 countries of the EEC and EFTA.

EUROLAB is since October 1998 a legal entity in the form of an international association under Belgian law (A.I.S.B.L. - Association Internationale Scientifique sans But Lucratif) setting it as the European Federation of National Associations of Measurement, Testing and Analytical Laboratories.

EUROLAB's policy is aiming:

- to support EUROLAB members' interests - interfacing with accreditors - and to help them in technical, regulatory and quality management matters, aiming at simplification and international harmonisation of regulations concerning competence and performance of laboratories,
- to be the major EUROPEAN multisectorial forum for laboratory and conformity assessment services, making product certification and technical evaluation more visible in EUROLAB,
- to become a major EUROPEAN focus point for laboratory intercomparisons and proficiency testing,
- to act as important partner of the EC, EFTA and the standardisation institutes, participating in international organisations such as EA, ILAC and developing links with other relevant communities world-wide,
- to use the EUROLAB network for public relations, and the provision of EUROLAB members' expertise to customers for the benefit of economy and society.
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