



**STATEMENT  
COMMISSIONER JANEZ POTOČNIK  
EPAA ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
30 NOVEMBER 2010**

GOOD AFTERNOON LADIES and gentlemen.

EVEN THOUGH I couldn't make it today, I'm pleased to be able to close the event. I hope you enjoyed it.

I HAVE BEEN a strong supporter of the EPAA from the start. And I very much welcome its new five-year mandate.

THIS WILL MEAN more development, validation and acceptance of alternative approaches. And a further push towards the '3Rs' of replacement, reduction and refinement of animal testing...your achievements in the first five years give me hope for the second mandate.

THE RECENTLY ADOPTED Directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes is even better news for the welfare of lab animals and for new alternative methods. The 3Rs idea is European law. It will have to be taken into account each time animal use is considered.

THE DIRECTIVE ALSO means the formal creation of an EU reference laboratory for the validation of alternative methods. So, it is difficult to doubt our commitment – or the commitment of Member States - to alternative methods.

THE COMING YEARS will see an even greater emphasis on alternative approaches and the implementation of 3Rs. Either through the Directive, the application of REACH, or the forthcoming biocides Regulation. The potential for action by the EPAA will increase, and partners must be ready to act.

TODAY MARKS THE end of a year-long focus on the reduction and refinement of animal use – 2 of the 3 Rs - although not the end of the process. Replacement of animal use has and will always be the ultimate goal of the European Commission. And reduction and refinement are equally important to our strategy to promote alternative methods. Significant animal welfare benefits can be realised quickly this way. In a world where scientific research is crucial and still sometimes uses animals, this is worthy of our support.

THE EPAA IS an excellent platform where experts can talk, exchange and discover. Research organisations and companies can use it to learn about best practice with the 2Rs. It gives the issues coherence.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

THE EPAA IS a unique, remarkable and voluntary partnership. Ideas, knowledge and creativity are being brought together, with great success. And there is no better way for industry and the Commission to replace, reduce and refine animal use...and ultimately reduce the suffering of animals.

I WILL FINISH by thanking the EPAA again for all of their work and to the speakers and participants of today's conference.

YOU HAVE MADE it a success - not just for today, but, that is my hope, for the future as well.

THANK YOU FOR your attention.