The Hague, 6 April 2011

EAC Health Ministers sixth annual meeting in the Republic of Burundi
Participation in EDCTP programme encouraged

The Ministers of Health of the East African Community, Permanent Secretaries and Senior government officials responsible for policies on health, research and regulatory issues convened in Bujumbura, Burundi, for their sixth annual Sectoral Council meeting from 28 March – 1 April 2011. The EDCTP programme was discussed in all three consecutive sessions, which contributed to galvanizing views on the connections between research activities and policy making. The council advocated for stronger participation by the EAC Partner States, including the republic of Burundi, in EDCTP projects. The organisation was represented by the head of its Africa Office, Dr Michael Makanga.

The council of Ministers of Health urged the partner states to enhance institutional capacity to conduct clinical trials under the recently established East Africa Consortium for Clinical Research (EACCR), stressing ownership and long-term sustainability. EACCR is one of the four networks of excellence funded by EDCTP in the sub-Saharan Regional Economic Communities.

The council directed the EAC Secretariat in collaboration with the Partner States to review the status of medicines regulation and regulation of the ethical conduct of clinical trials within the EAC partner states and also to develop a regional policy to guide the harmonisation of regulation of health research and clinical trials.

EDCTP funding levels for East Africa currently amount to a total of € 45,291,404. Funding is distributed to research in the participating EAC Partner States as follows: Kenya, € 9,389,832; Rwanda, € 1,895,731; Tanzania, € 19,026,884; Uganda, € 14,978,957. No projects are currently funded in Burundi.

The East African Community is the regional intergovernmental organisation of the Republics of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi and of the United Republic of Tanzania. Currently, EAC is an associated member of the EDCTP General Assembly and as such part of the governance of EDCTP. The African Regional Economic Communities nominated and confirmed two representatives in the General Assembly: Ambassador Juma Volter Mwapachu, the Secretary General for the East African Community, and Dr Jean-Jacques Moka, the Executive Secretary of OCEAC (Organisation de Coordination Pour la Lutte les Endemies en Afrique Centrale).

East African Community: http://www.eac.int/
East Africa Consortium for Clinical Research: http://www.eaccr.org/
About EDCTP

The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) was created in 2003 as a European response to the global health crisis caused by the three main poverty-related diseases (PRDs) of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Currently EDCTP is a partnership between 14 European Union member states plus Norway and Switzerland with 47 sub-Saharan African countries. The aim of the programme is to accelerate the development of new or improved drugs, vaccines and microbicides against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis through promoting the integration of national programmes of EDCTP European Member States and development of a genuine partnership with African counterparts.

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