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PRESS RELEASE

“True eHealth Innovation Always Comes from SMEs”

**-Eric Maurincomme, Chairman, COCIR Healthcare IT Committee and
Vice President and Chief Strategy & Marketing Officer of AGFA Healthcare**

BARCELONA (March, 17th 2010) – Eric Maurincomme, speaking in his role as Chairman of COCIR Healthcare IT Committee (www.cocir.org), the voice of the European Radiological, Electromedical and Healthcare IT Industry, has stated during his participation at eHealth week in Barcelona that, in this industry, true innovation always comes from small and medium enterprises, as a result of researchers’ work in tackling a specific problem posed to their organization. The challenge for policy makers and industry leaders is to ensure that these SME innovations are brought to a higher level. “This is the reason why interoperability and industry standards are so important in eHealth”, according to Mr. Maurincomme.

The topic of eHealth’s impact on the economy was addressed today at the World of Health IT (WoHIT) in a session moderated by Flora Giorgio, Project and Policy Officer, DG INFSO, European Commission. She emphasized that this is a lead sector with a high potential for growth in Europe. She also pointed out that the value of eHealth –and healthcare in general- has to be approached from a broader perspective than that of costs and revenue. Panelists Lorenzo Valeri (Rand Europe), Greta Nasi (Bocconi University, Milano), and Eric Maurincomme all agreed on the fact, that the benefits of eHealth go beyond financial figures and have to be assessed in terms of efficiency, safety and better patient care. At the end, this has a positive economic impact, as healthier societies are more productive.

According to a study commissioned by the EU whose results will be made public in April 2010, eHealth market in Europe can be currently quantified in 15 billion euro.

On the changes that are brought with the implementation of eHealth solutions, Eric Maurincommé has commented that while some jobs become redundant, there are new opportunities for skilled professionals. "Project managers, with a healthcare and IT background, are needed in all hospitals to run their eHealth systems".

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About the High Level eHealth Conference 2010:

Co-organised by the forthcoming Spanish Presidency of the European Union and by the European Commission, with the cooperation of the Regional Government of Catalonia and the Foundation TicSalut, the High Level eHealth Conference 2010 is a ministerial event, representing since 2003 an important annual milestone in the field of ICT for healthcare. The conference theme of this 8th edition – "eHealth for Sustainable Healthcare Delivery: global challenges through local actions" – acknowledges the pressing perspective of a rapidly ageing European society, where the progressively extended life expectancy and the consequent increase in the prevalence of chronic diseases are globally posing serious challenges to the sustainability of national health systems. The conference will present how and why eHealth can make the difference in facing such a global challenge. Visit www.ehealthweek2010.org for more information.

About the World of Health IT Conference & Exhibition:

The World of Health IT Conference & Exhibition is the leading forum for the advancement of Health IT in Europe. Addressing the needs of key stakeholders in the European eHealth Community, The World of Health IT Conference & Exhibition offers professional development sessions, vendor exhibitions, best practice exchanges, networking sessions, and debates and discussions on the issues that will shape the future of eHealth. The WoHIT Organising Committee comprises the EC (European Commission), HIMSS (Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society), EUROREC (European Institute for Health Records), COCIR (European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical and Healthcare IT Industry), EHTEL (European Health Telematics Association) and EFMI (European Federation for Medical Informatics). Since its inception in 2006, WoHIT has welcomed over 5,000 attendees and 180 exhibitors from over 60 countries throughout Europe and Worldwide. Visit www.worldofhealthit.org for more information.

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