



## PRESS RELEASE

### IHE-EUROPE STRENGTHENS ITS LEADERSHIP FOR HEALTHCARE IT INTEROPERABILITY

BRUSSELS - April 02, 2008 - In a signing ceremony yesterday in Brussels a new international non-profit association (inpa) called "IHE-Europe aisbl" was formally created.

Since 2000, IHE-Europe has been an active force in promoting interoperability for healthcare systems across the Continent. Besides developing technical frameworks for interoperability, the Connectathon is the major event organized yearly by IHE-Europe where software developed by many different companies is tested. More than 400 Engineers will be present at the eighth Connectathon which will take place in Oxford (UK).

The new pan-European legal status is an important milestone in the history of IHE with national initiatives already existing and active in Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Israel and the United Kingdom.

The IHE-Europe Co-Chair representing vendors of healthcare IT systems, Peter Künecke, said, "Patients are travelling freely across Europe today but their health records do not follow. From a technical standpoint, IHE-Europe is the only organisation providing a framework to allow interoperability between systems so that this becomes possible? IHE-Europe offers an exceptional forum for efficient contribution between users and vendors in various European countries."

"As a new legal entity, IHE-Europe can begin to actively pursue partnership and cooperation on EU-projects related to Healthcare, as well as with national authorities or organizations in Europe," said Karima Bourquard, Co-Chair of the new organisation representing the users of healthcare IT systems.

"COCIR has been very supportive of the IHE process over the 8 past years, born in the Radiology domain and which has now expanded in many other clinical domains and IT infrastructure. COCIR is happy to see this initiative taking off as an independent organisation and will continue to support IHE-Europe." said Nicole Denjoy, COCIR Secretary General.

During the past seven years, many organisations throughout Europe have been strongly supporting IHE – European and national User associations or organisations, research institutions as well as Vendor associations or companies.

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### **General Information:**

The purpose of the Association is to be an initiative by healthcare professionals and industry to improve in Europe the way computer systems in healthcare share information. The Association promotes in Europe the coordinated use of established standards such as DICOM and HL7 to address specific clinical needs in support of optimal patient care. Systems developed in accordance with the IHE Technical Frameworks which are specified by IHE - International, communicate with one another better, are easier to implement, and enable care providers to use information more effectively. The Association is a common action of users and vendors to achieve the Association's purpose. The Association is a regional association supporting the work and effort of IHE - International. More than 50 Integration Profiles have been developed over the last decade for several domains currently existing and not limited to cardiology, radiology, laboratory, pathology, ophthalmology, patient care coordination and IT infrastructure. IHE-Europe is open to all user and vendor organizations who would like to join and commit to this shared pan-European mission.

### **Important forthcoming events:**

IHE Connectathon in Oxford (April 7-11, 2008 at St. Catherine's College - Oxford, England): More than 400 engineers taking part will test their systems with partners and competitors to share patient information, a critical step in achieving systems interoperability to enhance the quality of patient care.

The first General Assembly for IHE-Europe aisbl will be held during the upcoming European Connectathon.