The fight against fake medicines:
As the Medicrime Convention comes into force in France, IRACM calls on all the countries that signed it to ratify it as soon as possible

Paris, France - September 22, 2016 – Now that France has ratified the Medicrime Convention, the International Institute for Research against Counterfeit Medicines (IRACM), the only international entity entirely dedicated to combatting counterfeit healthcare products, appealed to all the countries that signed it to rally together and implement this convention as soon as possible, thereby protecting all populations from this scourge that affects 10% of medicines sold worldwide. This appeal is also directed to the non-member countries of the Council of Europe as Medicrime is open to all countries in the world.

In response to the growing threat of fake medicines, particularly with the development of internet sales, by ratifying the Medicrime Convention, States are giving themselves a restrictive legal instrument to better combat and cooperate among themselves against fake healthcare products and offences threatening public health. That’s why Bernard Leroy, Director of IRACM urged, “Two thirds of the countries that signed still have not ratified the convention they signed five years ago. We must act as of now and send out a strong signal to the criminals.”

“France’s ratification of Medicrime is a positive step forward in the fight against fake medicine trafficking, and we hope it will encourage a new impetus in adopting this unique legal instrument everywhere,” said Bernard Leroy.

“To lead a truly effective combat, it is urgent for all the States to rally together and ratify the Medicrime Convention as quickly as possible. The International Institute for Research against Counterfeit Medicines is convinced that only by acting together with harmonized rules and regulations implemented at the international level can we contain this scourge. It affects the populations of Africa, Latin America and also the western countries, enriches the criminal networks and finances terrorism,” he recalled.

Some 10% of medicines sold worldwide are fake. This phenomenon is becoming more diverse and more widespread, and is now part and parcel of international organized crime. Contrary to popular belief, all the countries are concerned by the counterfeiting of healthcare products. According to the Council of Europe, world sales of counterfeit medicines have doubled in just five years (between 2005 and 2010), and is said to bring in over €70 billion a year to the traffickers.

“Fake medicines are a health scourge that is still under-recognized by the national health authorities. It is because it considers that the counterfeiting of medical products and related crimes threaten the right to life that the Council of Europe drafted the Medicrime Convention. It is the international community’s responsibility to eradicate this problem. This spirit of collective responsibility must increase so that we can protect people before it is too late,” concluded the Director of IRACM.
At the end of 2010, the Council of Ministers of the 47 states in the Council of Europe adopted the “Convention on counterfeit medical products and similar offences threatening public health”. Also known as the Medicrime Convention, it is the only international tool to criminalize the counterfeiting of medical products and also other similar offences that might have an effect on patients’ health. So far 26 states have signed the Medicrime Convention, which came into force on 1 January 2016. France is the ninth state to effectively ratify it, after Belgium, Armenia, Spain, Guinea, Hungary, Moldova, Albania and Ukraine.

- Medicrime makes it a **criminal offence** to:
  - produce counterfeit medical products;
  - supply, offer to supply and traffic counterfeit medical products;
  - falsify documents;
  - produce or supply medical products without authorization and sell medical devices that do not conform to the required standards.
- It concerns medicines for both human and veterinary use, medical devices, original and generic medicines.
- It facilitates international cooperation and protects the rights of the victims.


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**Signatures and ratifications**

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**About IRACM**

The International Institute of Research Against Counterfeit Medicines (IRACM) aims to raise awareness on the part of the general public and government authorities concerning the scourge of medication counterfeiting. To this end, IRACM helps governments to define their strategies, amalgamates and trains actors on the ground who are engaged in the fight against counterfeit drugs, compiles information, good practices and know-how, and acts as an interlocutor and consulting organism. IRACM submits proposals to political leaders and judicial officials as the national and international level. Since its inception, IRACM has become a center of excellence in its area of expertise, and has trained and made thousands of persons aware of the dangers of false medications, in more than 60 countries. In September 2013, IRACM issued an authoritative study report on “counterfeit medicines and criminal organizations”.

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