IAPB Announces Postponement of Global Assembly 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, 27 April 2020. The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) announced today that they will postpone their flagship event, the IAPB Global Assembly, from 12-14 October 2020 to 11-13 October 2021.

IAPB has been monitoring the COVID19 global pandemic and its impact closely. Keeping these developments and the risk in mind, and noting that the health, safety and well-being of the participants is their highest priority, IAPB’s board has decided to postpone the Global Assembly.

“It is very disappointing that we have to postpone the Global Assembly, but necessary in the current circumstances.” said Peter Holland, CEO, IAPB. “I cannot thank our hosts, the Singapore Eye Research Institute, enough. They have provided tremendous leadership, advice and support and we very much look forward to continue working with them over the next year. Across the world, eye health professionals are providing invaluable support to their communities and health services at this extraordinary time. I’d like to wish everyone in the eye health community well.”

The agency is working very closely with the event hosts in Singapore, the Singapore Eye Research Institute (SERI). The Global Assembly in 2021 will be hosted in Singapore and IAPB is looking forward to working with SERI on the preparations in the coming months.

“We are disappointed that we won’t be meeting in Singapore this October, to share ideas, connect and debate. Postponing the Global Assembly is an important decision to make in the global fight against COVID-19”, said Prof Tin Aung, Executive Director, Singapore Eye Research Institute. “Our team at SERI are working with IAPB to ensure the sector will mark a Global Assembly for a new era in 2021—and I look forward to welcoming you to Singapore”.

“The Global Assembly draws our community of eye care and public health professionals, together, to share, learn and connect. Whilst we cannot bring everyone together this year, 2021 will be the time to take stock and assess the impact of this global crisis”, said Joanna Conlon, Director of Development and Communications, IAPB. “The Global Assembly remains a great opportunity to lay the groundwork for the next decade of work in eye health,” added Ms. Conlon.
Notes to Editors:

About IAPB
The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) is the overarching alliance for the global eye care sector. We have over 150 members worldwide drawn from NGOs and civil society, corporate organisations, professional bodies and research and eye care institutions.

We were founded in 1975 to lead international efforts in blindness prevention activities. We work towards a world where no one is needlessly visually impaired, in which everyone has access to the best possible standard of eye health, and eye care is a core part of Universal Health Coverage.

www.iapb.org

Key facts

- At least 2.2 billion people have a vision impairment that may or may not be addressed.
- Of those, at least 1 billion people have a vision impairment that could have been prevented or has yet to be addressed.
- In addition, 2.6 billion people have myopia, including 312 million children under 19 years of age.
- Between 2011-2018 the number of people at risk of Trachoma blindness fell by 51% from 325 million to 157.7 million.
- River blindness (Onchocerciasis) could be the first blinding disease to be eliminated globally—probably by 2025.

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