Conclusions of the Seminar

Considering the following general principles:

- Veterinarians, with the collaboration of veterinary para-professionals, have a duty to ensure animal health, animal welfare and veterinary public health;

- Good veterinary governance relies on well-educated and competent veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals, benefitting from appropriate initial and continuing education taking into account the latest scientific advances and societal needs;

- Cooperation between Veterinary Education Establishments (VEE) and VSB is key to provide quality educational programmes;

- It is important that animal owners and relevant professionals have access to validated information enabling them to choose their attending veterinarian;

- The Veterinary Authority may find it necessary to delegate public service missions such as vaccination campaigns and issuing certificates to private sector veterinarians in whom it must be able to have complete confidence as much as any other body or person requesting services of a veterinarian;

- Good veterinary practices are not only a question of scientific and technical competencies but are just as much a question of ethics and professional conscientiousness;

As well as the outcomes of the OIE PVS and Gap Analysis missions in Eastern Europe and country presentations during the seminar, showing:

- That a better understanding of veterinarian, veterinary para-professional, VSB as per defined by the OIE is needed;

- That most of the countries of the region lack a formally authorised professional organization(s) such as a VSB;

- That educational standards for the training of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals do not, in some VEE in the region, meet the OIE minimum requirements and differ substantially between countries;

- The need for a greater harmonisation of veterinary educational standards to facilitate mutual international recognition and mobility in the region;
That, although when having a VSB, these entities lack important functions namely licensing/registration, veterinary education and code of conduct and disciplinary measures.

The participants in the seminar underline the need for countries to:

1. Establish by law a VSB or equivalent structure with clearly defined status and powers of authority and tasked with the same functions as established in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code;

2. Embark into the OIE PVS Pathway to establish / reinforce their VSB in compliance with the OIE international standards, and notably gain a clear understanding of the VSB situation in their country (OIE PVS evaluation), identify gaps to become compliant to the OIE standards (PVS Gap Analysis missions) and benefit from capacity building activities (in particular OIE Veterinary Legislation Support Programme and the OIE VSB Twinning Programme);

And agree that:

3. The VSB should be involved in the development of Core Curricula for their VEE in compliance with OIE Standards and Guidelines (Day-1 Competences; Model Core Curriculum Guidelines; etc) and if necessary, enforce their compliance;

4. The VSB should ensure that veterinarians have the necessary qualifications and competencies to perform their activities, and that this aptitude be certified by issuing a license to practice;

5. The VSB should record and keep updated the list of veterinarians entitled to practice, and that the relevant information of this list be made publically available; the list should be used by the VSB to monitor the demography and distribution of the veterinary profession;

6. The VSB should establish the standards of professional conduct of veterinarians ('Code of Conduct') - that are binding on all veterinarians registered on the list and eligible to practice and ensure their application, and disciplinary measures be taken whenever needed;

7. The purpose of the standards of professional conducts of veterinarians is to protect the society and animal owners from professional misbehaviors in the field of animal health, animal welfare and veterinary public health;

8. Similar provisions should be implemented for veterinary para-professionals, where they are authorised to perform certain acts of veterinary medicine under the supervision of a veterinarian;

9. OIE Member Countries should share their experiences on the development of VSB;

10. The next OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body « Ensuring excellence and ethics of the veterinary profession», Foz do Iguazu (Brazil), 4–6 December 2013, represent a good opportunity to raise awareness of the importance having proper VSB in OIE Member Countries.