Speeches for the Inauguration of IVI Director-General Dr. Christian Loucq

Opening and Welcome Address
Prof. Margaret Liu
Vice Chair, IVI Board of Trustees

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As Vice Chairperson of the IVI Board of Trustees it gives me great pleasure to be here today at the Inauguration of Dr. Christian Loucq as the new Director-General of IVI.

I am very happy to welcome all of you to this auspicious event, congratulating IVI’s new leader who will lead the Institute to having an even more significant positive impact on global health during his term as Director-General. We are particularly pleased that many ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps and government representatives are here with us today. In the company of our distinguished guests, members of the IVI Board and staff, I would like to extend my deepest congratulations to you, Dr. Loucq, on your inauguration, and warmly welcome you to the IVI community.

During its 14 years as an international organization, IVI has made great strides in advancing vaccine science, including making a needed new vaccine a reality, and providing the evidence needed by countries and international bodies to make vaccines available to children who need them the most. As a member of IVI’s Board and Scientific Advisory Group, I have been deeply involved in the governance and scientific stewardship of IVI since its early days. It has been truly rewarding to oversee the dynamic and successful growth and contributions of the Institute as a leading center of excellence having an impact on global health over the years.

When IVI was established in 1997, the international community, the United Nations Development Programme – which initiated the founding of IVI - and the Republic of Korea – IVI’s host country - all shared one goal for IVI: to accelerate the development and introduction of new vaccines for the world’s poorest people, especially children. IVI has made tremendous progress in this humanitarian quest to reduce needless deaths and suffering from vaccine-preventable diseases in the developing world.

Since its inception, IVI has grown not only in terms of the number of programs and staff but also in terms of its public health impact and scientific reputation. IVI began with a staff of less than 10, and now, it has nearly 160 staff from 17 different countries. The Institute has conducted research projects in over 30 countries to accelerate the development and introduction of new and underutilized vaccines against the world’s neglected diseases, including diarrheal and enteric diseases such as cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery and rotavirus; respiratory infections and meningitis such as *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib), pneumococcal disease, influenza, and tuberculosis; and vector-borne viral diseases such as dengue fever and Japanese encephalitis.
Notably, the world’s first low-cost oral cholera vaccine, Shanchol™, which was developed in large part through IVI with generous funding and constant support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, achieved WHO prequalification last September, paving the way for its global use. This is a truly remarkable achievement for a young organization like IVI. In addition, IVI has several promising vaccine candidates against diseases such as typhoid, dysentery and pneumococcal disease in its development pipeline. Besides vaccine development, IVI has developed a new adjuvant designed to make vaccines more potent and established a new method of delivering vaccines under the tongue, potentially eliminating the need for needles. These achievements have all been made here at this magnificent headquarters building generously donated by, and with the continued support of, the Republic of Korea.

IVI’s impressive growth and achievements have been made possible due to munificent support and guidance from our founders, donors, and collaborators. Special thanks go to the Korean government, the First Ladies of Korea, Seoul National University, the governments of Sweden, Kuwait and the Netherlands, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, as well as numerous private and public sector donors in Korea and from abroad such as the WHO and the US NIH.

IVI is a truly unique international organization exclusively dedicated to developing vaccines that are critically needed by the world's poorest children, and providing the evidence needed for their introduction and usage. Our extremely talented and devoted staff, along with our worldwide network of donors and collaborators, have conducted pioneering work that is now making a significant difference in developing countries. But we need to, and can do more, bearing in mind the millions of children who die now, each year in need of vaccines. Building upon IVI’s foundation and our previous successes, IVI must, and is now poised under Dr. Loucq’s leadership, to advance to the next phase of development to translate and deliver these accomplishments into more lives saved in more countries.

Thus we and our collaborators heartily welcome Dr. Christian Loucq as IVI’s new Director-General, and we look forward to his leadership.

Introduction of Dr. Christian Loucq
Prof. Ragnar Norrby
Chairman, IVI Board of Trustees

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my great pleasure to gather with you here today in welcoming the new Director-General of the International Vaccine Institute. As Chairman of the IVI Board of Trustees, I have had the great privilege of shepherding IVI’s robust growth as an international organization over the past several years.
I am therefore excited to stand here today to commemorate the inauguration of IVI’s new leader and to open a new chapter in IVI’s history. On behalf of the IVI Board of Trustees, staff and the international community, it is my honor to introduce Dr. Christian Loucq to you as he assumes leadership of the Institute.

IVI is most fortunate to have someone of Dr. Loucq’s caliber as its leader, particularly in this period of the “Decade of Vaccines,” which is a ten-year commitment made by Bill and Melinda Gates and other global health leaders to ensure the discovery, development, and delivery of lifesaving vaccines globally, especially to the world’s poorest countries. Dr. Loucq has devoted his entire career to vaccines. As a leading international expert on the evaluation of vaccines in developing countries, Dr. Loucq brings to IVI his extensive expertise and experience from more than 30 years in the field.

A native of France, Dr. Loucq acquired his state doctorate of human medicine at the University of Paris X and a diploma of public health and tropical medicine from the University of Aix-Marseilles. Dr. Loucq started his career as a doctor in Africa, working in sub-Saharan Africa for six years. He then spent a large part of his professional career working in the vaccine industry. His experience spans the globe, where he has lived and worked in Algeria, Belgium, Chad, China, India, the Netherlands, Niger, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Prior to joining IVI, Dr. Loucq served as the director of PATH’s Malaria Vaccine Initiative (MVI) in the United States. With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, MVI works to accelerate the development of malaria vaccines and to ensure their access in the developing world.

Dr. Loucq joined PATH, a nonprofit organization, after working in industry for over two decades because he wanted to synergize his interest and expertise in vaccines with public service. During his time at MVI, he successfully spearheaded a major clinical trial of an experimental malaria vaccine at 11 sites in seven countries in Africa. This vaccine was demonstrated to effectively halve the risk of African children getting malaria, and if everything goes well, will most likely become the world's first vaccine against this deadly disease.

As well, Dr. Loucq has been involved in most stages of vaccine development throughout his career from managing vaccine businesses in China, India, and Thailand and has worked with large vaccine companies such as GlaxoSmithKline and Sanofi Pasteur, and biotechnology firms such as Rhein Biotech and Acambis. Due to his extensive experience of working in both the private and public sectors, Dr. Loucq has built dynamic collaborations to foster vaccine development that include partnering with local governments, developing public-private partnerships, and establishing local private collaborations.

Throughout the years, he has proven himself to be a leader of intelligence, insight, and wisdom. Above all, he has displayed leadership and commitment to improving the health of people in poor countries. More importantly, with his signature smile, he is known to be friendly and approachable as a colleague. As he begins a challenging new chapter in his life as IVI’s leader, I
have no doubt that he will be warmly regarded and respected by everyone in the IVI community and beyond.

With his ample experience and proven track record in medicine, pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and global health, Dr. Loucq has what IVI needs to move the Institute forward to the next phase. I am confident that under his leadership, IVI will continue its impressive progress towards creating a world where all children are immunized against deadly infectious diseases, regardless of where they are born.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, in this light, I would like to ask all of you to warmly welcome Dr. Loucq and to give him the full support that he will need to advance IVI to the next level of excellence. I would like to close today by thanking the many supporters, colleagues, and friends of IVI from around the world.

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Congratulatory Remarks
Prof. Dong Sung Cho
President of Korea Support Committee for IVI

Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The Korea Support Committee for the International Vaccine Institute is very privileged to join the Board of Trustees of IVI and its staff, IVI's 41 signatories, and other stakeholders in congratulating Dr. Christian Loucq on his inauguration as IVI Director-General. On behalf of the Korea Support Committee for IVI, I heartily welcome Dr. Loucq to the IVI community and Korea.

IVI was established in 1997 as the first international organization hosted by Korea. Over the past years, the Government of Korea has provided generous support to IVI to ensure that the Institute seamlessly carries out its humanitarian mission.

In order to promote IVI's global mission and to advance science and technology through IVI in Korea, a number of preeminent Korean citizens joined hands to establish the Korea Support Committee for IVI as a private sector organization in 1998.

The Committee inherited functions of a “Seoul National University’s special taskforce for the establishment of the IVI,” which had been commissioned by the Korean government. Throughout the years, KSC has successfully played a bridging role between the Korean government and people, and the Institute.

KSC is currently operating under the leadership of the First Lady Madam Kim Yoon-ok, who is serving as its Honorary President after former First Ladies Lee Hee-ho and Kwon Yang-suk.
Committee has played a key role in promoting IVI and mobilizing resources for the Institute in Korea. Having shared in IVI’s robust growth over the past years, KSC has remained a sincere partner and supporter of the Institute.

Medical science has made remarkable advances. However, 6 million children under age five are dying from infectious diseases which could be prevented through increased access to new vaccines.

Children are our future. Humanity will have a better future only when all of us make concerted efforts to provide necessary care and love to our children. The Korean people are very proud to be host to IVI, as the Institute endeavors to make new vaccines available to the world’s poorest children.

Over the past years, many countries, including Sweden, Kuwait, and the Netherlands, philanthropic organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and countless other supporters have pooled resources and wisdom to support IVI’s noble cause. With their commitment and generosity, IVI has emerged as a major international organization and a key player in global vaccine research for the poorest children.

Under the leadership of Dr. Loucq, IVI is expected to make even more contributions to improving global health and advancing the welfare of humanity in the years ahead. I anticipate that Korea, the Gates Foundation and other partners will find exciting new opportunities to work with IVI to accelerate the development and deployment of new vaccines for children who need them the most.

Dr. Loucq,

We, members of KSC, are confident that with your vision, leadership and expertise, IVI will continue to stride and move to the next level of development in the years to come, building upon the achievements and success the Institute witnessed in the past.

On this august occasion, we assure you that KSC, for its part, will remain committed to extending full support to IVI under your leadership. KSC is highly enthusiastic about working with the IVI team, as all of us share the common goal of creating a world where all the children of the world are protected by vaccines. Thank you.

Congratulatory Remarks
Mr. Bong-hyun Kim
Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea
Dr. Christian Loucq, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea, it is my great pleasure and privilege to extend my most sincere congratulations on the inauguration of the new Director-General of the International Vaccine Institute. I am pleased to join all of you in warmly welcoming Dr. Christian Loucq as he assumes the role of leading the IVI into its second decade.

The international community has seen a great progress in the vaccine industry in recent years. Yet, new products developed specifically for first use in developing countries or licensed by non-commercial entities were very rare. Since its launch in 1997, the IVI has pursued with determination the noble cause of combating infectious diseases through innovations in vaccine design, development and introduction, addressing the needs of people in developing countries.

Over the past decade, despite the whole range of challenges before the IVI, tremendous steps forward have been taken. Most recently, one of the only two WHO-approved brands of cholera vaccine in the world was developed by the IVI, and a study led by the IVI revealed the effectiveness of a typhoid vaccine in preventing the fever among children ages 2 to 5 in India. On the occasion of delivering his celebratory remarks on the 10th anniversary of the Institute, UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon praised the IVI for having developed into a “pioneering centre for vaccine research.” Not resting on its laurels today, the IVI shall further endeavor to become the world’s leading vaccine institute.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of the Republic of Korea has every confidence that under the leadership of Dr. Loucq, the IVI shall continue its contribution to improving the poor health conditions of children in less developed countries. As a host country of this august Institute, my Government wishes to reaffirm its full support for the IVI and looks forward to working closely with Dr. Loucq and the IVI in the years to come in pursuit of the noble goals which unite us.

Congratulatory Speech
Dr. Lance Gordon
Deputy Director, Infectious Diseases, Global Health & SPL for Neglected Infectious Diseases from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Distinguished guests:

- On behalf of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, I am pleased to be here with you today. I extend our congratulations to the Board of Trustees, staff and stakeholders of the International Vaccine Institute on the occasion of Dr. Christian Loucq’s inauguration.
- IVI is an important partner in our efforts to improve the health and lives of people in the poorest parts of the world.
- We are pleased to partner with the government of Korea and many other donors in supporting IVI’s important work.
- Vaccines prevent disease and give children a healthy start to life; they represent one of the best investments in global health.
  - Two decades ago, global health leaders resolved to wipe polio off the planet and today we’re 99 percent of the way there.
  - For a few dollars per child, vaccines can prevent several diseases for a lifetime.
- Children in the poorest parts of the world must have access to the same life-saving vaccines available to children in rich countries.
- Great progress is being made toward achieving equal access to vaccines but more commitment is needed.
  - There used to be a lag of 15-20 years before a child in a poor country would get the same vaccines that a child in a rich country did – now we have the chance to deliver new vaccines to all children.
  - We now have affordable vaccines that save children from two of the biggest killers in the developing world – diarrhea and pneumonia.
  - More research and development is needed to address potentially vaccine-preventable diseases that kill two million children every year.
- IVI has made a significant contribution to saving children’s lives through the development of Shanchol, a vaccine for the prevention of cholera.
- Christian’s leadership at PATH’s Malaria Vaccine Initiative demonstrated his commitment to the development of vaccines for diseases primarily affecting those less fortunate. The interim results from the phase III RTS,S trial are encouraging and are proof that it is possible to create a vaccine that is effective against malaria.
• We look forward to continuing to work with Christian in his new role as Director General and to furthering our partnership with IVI.