

IAF ILAC Joint Press Release

World Accreditation Day 2010 – “Global Acceptance”

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) and the 12th anniversary of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA). The principle aim of these arrangements is as relevant today as it was when they were first established, and that is to support the freedom of world trade by eliminating technical barriers to trade. The creation of an international network among accreditation bodies removes the need for suppliers to have their products or services re-evaluated in each country they enter on a commercial basis. The key to the arrangements is that the results of accredited organisations are recognised as equivalent by signatory accreditation bodies. In this way, certificates issued by accredited organisations can therefore be accepted throughout the world.

‘Global Acceptance’ is therefore an apt theme for World Accreditation Day 2010, a worldwide initiative jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation-related activities. June 9th 2010 will mark the day, which will see major national events and press campaigns carried out in more than 60 countries.

Internationally-agreed standards and accreditation play an important role in the support of competitive markets and cross-border trade. This is increasingly important as supply chains are ever-extending to new overseas markets as businesses seek to lower costs or satisfy contract terms, whilst maintaining a level of confidence that products are technically compatible, to specification, and safe.

In such complex markets, reassurance in the measurements, tests, inspections, and certification performed in another jurisdiction is essential. Without these standards, the free exchange of goods and services would be hampered by technical barriers, thereby increasing costs for importers and consumers.

Global acceptance of accredited certificates is a central pillar of accreditation as the harmonization of assessment requirements and processes at a worldwide level, provides businesses and regulators with confidence that products entering the market conform to

specification, meet national legal and regulatory requirements, and will therefore serve to protect public interests in general.