



## Global Initiative for the Elimination of Avoidable Blindness

### VISION 2020 – The Right To Sight

#### - Development -

- 05/1994 A Task Force for Prevention of Blindness was founded by CBM and SSI (Sight Savers International) to initiate and finance joint activities of NGOs and WHO. C. Garms, Executive Director CBM, was appointed as Chairman.
- 09/1995 Based on a PR idea “Perfect Vision 20/20 for everyone in the year 2020”, C. Garms and Dr. Foster (Medical Director of CBM) developed a plan for a global Prevention of Blindness Initiative.
- 11/1995 First discussion of C. Garms and Dr. Foster with Dr. Thylefors, Programme Director of WHO/PBD regarding a global initiative on prevention of blindness. It was agreed that the Task Force should follow up that idea.
- 06/1996 A workshop of experts in the field of prevention of blindness was held in WHO. The result was a first outline of the Global Initiative document.
- 01/1997 After a number of meetings and revisions a final draft of the Global Initiative document was developed.
- 02/1997 The programme advisory group of WHO reviewed the document and endorsed a revised version.
- The Partnership Committee of NGOs adopted the document and asked the Task Force to develop a global PR campaign.
- 04/1997 An initial group of PR experts together with the Task Force was assembled to further explore how a coalition for the Global Campaign could be built.
- 09/1997 A bigger group of Partnership Committee members and PR experts finally agreed to launch a joint Global Campaign to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020. The Task Force was asked to further develop the launch.

- 09/1997 - 11/1998      The name and logo of VISION 2020 - The Right to Sight - was developed.
- VISION 2020 became a joint project of the IAPB Task Force and WHO and an official agreement was signed.
- An exhibit, pamphlet and a promotional brochure was produced and it was planned to organize the launch of the campaign on 18 February, 1999 attached to the PAG meeting in Geneva.
- 02/1999                      Official launch of the global campaign "VISION 2020 – The Right To Sight" by the Director-General of WHO in Geneva.
- 09/1999                      The General Assembly of IAPB in Beijing, China, was held. The theme was "VISION 2020 – The Right To Sight" and the working sessions followed the priorities of the VISION 2020 campaign.
- 09/1999 - today              Regional and national workshops and launch events in WHO / IAPB regions are organised to raise awareness for Prevention of Blindness, to develop regional plans and to identify priority programmes.
- 05/2003                      The WHO Resolution on Elimination of Avoidable Blindness was adopted by the World Health Assembly. The adoption of this document expressed strong commitment of WHO member countries to pursue elimination of avoidable blindness worldwide.
- 10/2003                      On the occasion of the World Sight Day Pope John Paul II officially recognised "VISION 2020 – The Right to Sight" and blessed the fight against blindness around the world. Through his blessing he helped to call the attention to the victims of blindness in the developing countries and encouraged the VISION 2020 coalition to continue their precious work against avoidable blindness. Mr Christian Garms, CBM was received in an audience and a documentation of VISION 2020 was presented to the Pope.
- 09/2004                      The Seventh General Assembly of the IAPB, held in collaboration with the World Health Organization, took place in Dubai. The theme of the Assembly was "Partnership in VISION 2020" and nearly 600 delegates from some 75 countries participated. The Assembly was also the occasion for a change in the leadership of the IAPB, with new officers elected to lead the Agency over the next four years. The Assembly also ratified a new constitution and significant changes in the structure of the Agency, which will make it more streamlined and efficient, so as to achieve the goals of its primary function in promoting VISION 2020 – The Right to Sight.

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