

Santen and IAPB taking action to implement the first ever UN General Assembly resolution recognizing the link between eye health and sustainable development

26 July 2021 – Osaka, Japan – Santen Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. (“Santen”) announced today that Santen, in partnership with the [International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness](#) (IAPB), will take action to implement United Nations General Assembly Resolution [A/75/L.108](#) on eye health. This comes after several months of collaboration with the IAPB, advocating for global action to improve access to basic eye health services.

Santen is committed to reducing the loss of social and economic opportunities for people living with eye conditions. The new UN General Assembly resolution encourages governments and key stakeholders from around the world to mobilize the necessary resources to address this urgent priority. UN entities including UNICEF, UN-Women, UNDP, UNESCO, the International Labor Organization and the UN Road Safety Collaboration will work to promote and include eye health in their work. International financial institutions and donors will be urged to include eye health priorities in their funding programs. We take the adoption of this resolution as an opportunity to further enhance our policy and advocacy activities with the IAPB.

“The eye health sector has believed for a long time that quality eye care is critical to the world achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” said Peter Holland, CEO of IAPB. “IAPB and its members are committed to supporting governments to implement this resolution and ensure that no one is left behind”.

To support the implementation of this resolution, Santen and the IAPB will work together on a number of initiatives as part of their ongoing strategic partnership, including:

- Partnership with national governments and supranational stakeholders to establish an effective monitoring system and encourage the inclusion of eye health in voluntary national reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Coordination of an advocacy and public affairs strategy to lobby for the inclusion of two eye health targets in the next review of the SDGs by the UN Inter-Agency Expert Group in 2025.

Today, 1.1 billion people are living with preventable sight loss due to a lack of access to basic eye care services. With appropriate allocation of resources and investment for the early detection and treatment of eye conditions, including disease awareness campaigns and regular eye tests, sight can be protected.¹ Vision loss can have a significant detrimental impact on quality of life (QOL), including depression, discomfort and social isolation. Improving access to eye care services therefore, has the potential to

improve the QOL for millions of people.² Additionally, sight loss is calculated to cost the global economy \$411bn in productivity each year, showing it has tremendous economic consequences³. Eye health is directly linked to more than half of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), including eliminating poverty and hunger, improving education, and gender equality⁴. Therefore, a “whole of government approach” to eye care and strengthened collaboration between stakeholders is necessary to ensure the people living with preventable sight loss receive access to support and treatment.

“The adoption of UN resolution on eye health represents a major leap towards the realization of our WORLD VISION (Happiness with Vision)” said Shigeo Taniuchi, President & CEO of Santen, “There is ample evidence that eye health is a global development issue. About 90% of preventable vision loss occurs in low and middle income countries, of which 55% affects women and girls. People, in general, receive 80% of information visually and eye disease tend to be chronic, affecting patients’ quality of life. As a specialized company dedicated to ophthalmology, we are committed to promoting international efforts on eye health and contributing to the realization of the SDGs. Supporting the implementation of this resolution is a crucial step towards facilitating access to eye care services and reducing the loss of social and economic opportunities for people around the world due to eye conditions”.

References:

1. International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB). Vision Atlas. Available here: <https://www.iapb.org/learn/vision-atlas>
2. Lancet Global Health Commission Report (2020). Available here: <https://globaleyehealthcommission.org/app/uploads/2020/12/Commission-Report-1.pdf>
3. Lancet Global Health Commission Report (2020). Available here: <https://globaleyehealthcommission.org/app/uploads/2020/12/Commission-Report-1.pdf>
4. Lancet Global Health Commission Report (2020). Available here: <https://globaleyehealthcommission.org/app/uploads/2020/12/Commission-Report-1.pdf>

About Santen

As a specialized company dedicated to ophthalmology, Santen carries out research, development, marketing, and sales of pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter products, and medical devices, and its products now reach patients in over 60 countries.

Toward realizing “WORLD VISION” (Happiness with Vision), the world Santen ultimately aspires to achieve, as a “Social Innovator”, we aim to reduce the social and economic opportunity loss of people around the world caused by eye diseases and defects by orchestrating and mobilizing key technologies and players around the world.

With scientific knowledge and organizational capabilities nurtured over a 130-year history, Santen provides products and services to contribute to the well-being of patients, their loved ones and consequently to society.

For more information, please visit Santen's website (www.santen.com).

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