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PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Across the globe, natural disasters, global health security crises, and complex emergencies are increasing; this includes such recent examples as the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the Syrian refugee crises. Such situations illustrate the urgent need for advanced planning and cross-sector coordination and collaboration to enable an empowered local emergency response and to mitigate future crises. Effective crisis response requires strong underlying systems as part of a broader approach to inclusive supply chain management, with the ultimate goal of meeting beneficiaries' needs.

The focus of the 7th annual Health & Humanitarian Logistics Conference is "Strengthening Health and Humanitarian Logistics in Africa." The conference will highlight specific challenges facing the region including limited resources, ongoing conflicts, famine, endemic diseases, and others. The conference brings together practitioners from across public health, government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN bodies, industry, and academia in a neutral platform to discuss common challenges and successes in global health and humanitarian operations and long-term development; share innovative research; and establish priorities in terms of strategy, policy, and investment for effective response and long-term resilience.

The agenda features speakers such as Tony Banbury, the former head of the United Nations Mission on Ebola Emergency Response; government leaders from Liberia, Nigeria and Togo; logistics and program directors from NGOs such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, International Medical Corps, FHI 360. and the UN World Food Programme; and companies working on cross-sector initiatives such as the Coca-Cola Company, Imperial Health Sciences, and Johnson & Johnson. Plenary panels include Health Crisis Supply Chains and the Ebola Response, Improving Public Health Systems, Infrastructure and Capacity Building, and Pre-planning for Complex Humanitarian Emergencies. Break-out workshops will also offer participants the chance to discuss these topics in greater depth through case studies and partnership examples.

For the first time, the conference will take place on the African continent at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is made possible by generous support from the UPS Foundation, the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan, Imperial Health Sciences and Imres Medical Solutions, Walmart, Johnson & Johnson, and the Georgia Institute of Technology. The 2015 conference is co-organized by the Georgia Tech Center for Health & Humanitarian Systems, the INSEAD Humanitarian Research Group, the MIT Humanitarian Response Lab, and Northeastern University.

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