

MEMORANDUM FOR CABINET BY THE
MINISTER OF COMMONWEALTH AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND THE HON. MINISTER OF HEALTH

European Agreement on the Exchange
of Blood-Grouping Reagents

The European Agreement on the Exchanges of Blood-Grouping Reagents, which is one of the many Council of Europe Agreements and Conventions, was signed in Strasbourg on the 14th May, 1962, and has to date been ratified by 8 of the 18 member States of the Council and signed by five others.

2. This Agreement is meant to make blood-grouping reagents available to the Contracting Parties who are in urgent need of them, provided they have sufficient stocks for their own needs.

3. For the purpose of this Agreement, the expression "blood-grouping reagents" refers to reagents of human, animal and plant and other origin used for blood-grouping and for the detection of blood incompatibilities.

4. The Minister of Health advises that Malta should sign the agreement but that the application should be limited in the case of Malta to blood-grouping reagents of human origin. This can be done by a declaration in terms of Article 1 of the Agreement. The Crown Advocate General has confirmed that there is no legal objection to the signing of the Agreement.

5. Contracting Parties undertake to charge only cost of collection, processing and carriage of such substances and the cost, if any, of their purchase. There should be no profit on such substances which are to be used solely for medical purposes and are to be delivered only to bodies designated by the Governments concerned. Contracting Parties are moreover required to take all necessary measures to exempt from all import duties the blood-grouping reagents placed at the disposal of the Parties. The Comptroller of Customs has confirmed that blood-grouping reagents are not subject to duty under the Malta Customs tariff.

6. The provisions to be observed by Contracting Parties and the specifications in accordance with which

consignments/.....

consignments of blood-grouping reagents should be prepared, are laid down in a Protocol which is part of the Agreement. The Ministry of Health has advised that Malta is not, and is not likely to be, in a position to supply blood-grouping reagents to other Contracting Parties. Signature of the Agreement however will enable Malta to receive the benefit of supplies from other Contracting Parties. It is therefore recommended that the Agreement be signed without reservation in respect of ratification or approval so that it may come into force one month after the date of signature.

7. Hon. Members are requested to agree to Malta signing this Agreement without reservation as to ratification or approval, but with the declaration explained in paragraph 4 of this memorandum. It is proposed that the agreement be signed in Strasbourg at the May meeting of the Council of Ministers.

13th April, 1966.