



## News Release

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### **Merck & Co., Inc. Donates Antimalarial Candidate to Medicines for Malaria Venture for Use in Developing World**

WHITEHOUSE STATION N.J., and GENEVA, March 18, 2009 – Merck & Co., Inc. and Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV), a not-for-profit virtual research and development organization dedicated to reducing the burden of malaria, today announced a licensing agreement for an investigational drug candidate for the treatment of malaria in the developing world.

Under terms of the agreement, Merck, whose researchers discovered the candidate, has granted MMV an exclusive, royalty-free license to pursue development of the investigational candidate for the treatment of malaria in malaria-endemic countries. Merck retains the option to become MMV's development partner upon completion of the first Phase II clinical trial of the candidate. Also within the agreement Merck has committed to not ultimately profiting from its use in developing countries.

"There remains a significant need for the development of novel drugs to treat and prevent life-threatening malaria infections due to the increasing emergence of resistance to current therapies. It is also important that these new drugs are cost-effective and curative after only a few days of therapy," said Dennis M. Schmatz, Ph.D., vice president Merck Research Laboratories. "By partnering with MMV on this project we hope to accelerate the clinical development of this promising candidate to hopefully meet these needs."

"Malaria researchers are working round the clock to develop new medicines to stem the unacceptable loss of life due to this deadly disease," said Dr. Chris Hentschel, president and chief executive officer of MMV. "MMV welcomes this opportunity to work with Merck and to move research on this exciting antimalarial candidate into the development phase. The more treatments we can develop against the deadly malaria parasite the closer we will get to its ultimate eradication"

The antimalarial candidate is an orally available compound, which could potentially provide a daily or twice-daily curative dosing regimen. In preclinical studies, it has shown to be

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effective against *P. falciparum*, the organism that causes acute malaria, including multi-drug resistant strains. The compound is produced via relatively simple chemical synthesis and demonstrates a high degree of stability. For these reasons, it is anticipated that, if shown to be effective in treating malaria in humans, it should be possible to produce large quantities of the drug at low cost. Given the magnitude of the global malaria challenge, it is essential that effective drugs can be produced in sufficient quantities and at an affordable price to enable availability in the world's poorest countries.

Preclinical safety and efficacy evaluation of the antimalarial drug candidate has been completed, and it is now ready to be advanced to clinical studies evaluating its safety and efficacy in humans. MMV will be responsible for the clinical program at this stage and representatives from Merck will be included as members of the advisory board for the project.

### **About Medicines for Malaria Venture**

Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV) was established in 1999 as a not-for-profit organization created to discover, develop and deliver safe, effective and affordable antimalarial drugs through effective public-private partnerships. MMV's vision is a world in which affordable and effective medicines will cure and protect the millions at risk of malaria and help to ultimately eradicate this terrible disease.

MMV is currently managing the largest-ever portfolio of antimalarial projects in collaboration with over 100 pharmaceutical, academic, and endemic-country partners in 38 countries. Its robust portfolio of around 50 projects includes 19 completely new classes of compounds in the discovery phase. In partnership with Novartis, MMV has recently launched its first product – *Coartem Dispersible* a unique, child-friendly, sweet-tasting, dispersible formulation of the parent drug Coartem®. The two remaining projects in clinical development will be registered by stringent regulatory authorities and are expected to gain market authorization by 2010.

### **About Merck**

Merck & Co., Inc. is a global research-driven pharmaceutical company dedicated to putting patients first. Established in 1891, Merck discovers, develops, manufactures and markets vaccines and medicines to address unmet medical needs. The Company devotes extensive efforts to increase access to medicines through far-reaching programs that not only donate Merck medicines but help deliver them to the people who need them. Merck also publishes unbiased health information as a not-for-profit service. For more information, visit [www.merck.com](http://www.merck.com).

**Forward-Looking Statement**

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" as that term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based on management's current expectations and involve risks and uncertainties, which may cause results to differ materially from those set forth in the statements. The forward-looking statements may include statements regarding product development, product potential or financial performance. No forward-looking statement can be guaranteed and actual results may differ materially from those projected. Merck undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. Forward-looking statements in this press release should be evaluated together with the many uncertainties that affect Merck's business, particularly those mentioned in the risk factors and cautionary statements in Item 1A of Merck's Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2008, and in any risk factors or cautionary statements contained in the Company's periodic reports on Form 10-Q or current reports on Form 8-K, which the Company incorporates by reference.

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