



NEWS RELEASE

Merck to Announce Multiple Scientific Efforts to Combat COVID-19

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KENILWORTH, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, will today announce three significant scientific initiatives to combat COVID-19: two agreements to develop potential vaccines against SARS-CoV-2, and a research collaboration to advance the development of a novel antiviral candidate. Today's announcements are:

- Merck to acquire Themis Bioscience, a company focused on vaccines and immune-modulation therapies for infectious diseases, including COVID-19;
- IAVI and Merck collaborate to develop vaccine against COVID-19;
- Merck and Ridgeback Bio collaborate to advance development of an oral antiviral candidate for COVID-19, EIDD-2801.

"With our singular legacy and expertise in vaccines and anti-infective medicines, we know Merck has a responsibility to engage in the scientific community's efforts to find new medicines and vaccines to bring this pandemic to an end," said Kenneth C. Frazier, chairman and chief executive officer, Merck. "Merck has been fully committed to developing an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic since it was first recognized, and we know that success will require global collaboration among countries and companies and more. Today, we are proud to mark the culmination of our swift, conscientious and concerted effort to identify some of the most promising solutions to this global challenge and to put our resources to use in accelerating these efforts. We will ensure that all of these programs have the resources, attention and focus they need – and that the COVID-19 pandemic demands."

"COVID-19 is a global challenge and requires global solutions. Merck intends to make any vaccine or medicine we develop for this pandemic broadly accessible and affordable globally, and we are working now to accomplish this

goal as quickly as possible. As we just demonstrated with our Ebola vaccine, when the world needs to come together to tackle new and daunting challenges, Merck can be counted on to do our part. Though the challenge of this pandemic is immense, we know that science and collaboration will triumph, just as they have before. While we cannot predict when this battle will be won, we are confident that science is on our side, that collaboration is already well underway, and that together, we will prevail.”

About Merck

For more than 125 years, Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world’s most challenging diseases in pursuit of our mission to save and improve lives. We demonstrate our commitment to patients and population health by increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to prevent and treat diseases that threaten people and animals – including cancer, infectious diseases such as HIV and Ebola, and emerging animal diseases – as we aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on **Twitter**, **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **YouTube** and **LinkedIn**.

Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the “company”) includes “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company’s management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. There can be no guarantees with respect to pipeline products that the products will receive the necessary regulatory approvals or that they will prove to be commercially successful. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of the recent global outbreak of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19); the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company’s ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company’s patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2019 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site (www.sec.gov).

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