



NEWS RELEASE

Jan7Merck Congratulates Ecuador as Second Country to Receive PAHO/WHO Verification of Elimination of River Blindness

10/3/2014

Merck (NYSE:MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, applauds the government of Ecuador on being the second country in the world to receive World Health Organization (WHO) verification of the elimination of river blindness (onchocerciasis) using MECTIZAN® (ivermectin).

Ecuador worked in partnership with the MECTIZAN Donation Program and The Carter Center-sponsored Onchocerciasis Elimination Program for the Americas, as well as the Pan American Health Organization, the Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), to eliminate onchocerciasis – one of the leading causes of preventable blindness worldwide.

“We celebrate the achievement of this critical milestone with the people of Ecuador and the MECTIZAN Donation Program and its partners. The verification of Ecuador as the second country in the world to eliminate the transmission of river blindness is a highly motivating development because it reminds us of what is possible,” said Kenneth C. Frazier, chairman and chief executive officer of Merck. “Merck is proud to be a part of a committed and effective alliance that continues to work toward the ultimate goal of eliminating river blindness globally.”

For more information, please view the news releases from:

- **Ecuador’s Ministry of Health**
- **PAHO/WHO and the Carter Center-sponsored Onchocerciasis Elimination Program for the Americas**

About the MECTIZAN Donation Program

In October 1987, Merck announced it would donate the medication MECTIZAN to all who need it for as long as necessary until onchocerciasis is eliminated as a public health problem. The MECTIZAN Donation Program reaches more than 150 million people annually.

In Latin America, since 1989, more than 13 million treatments of donated MECTIZAN have been delivered by community health workers and non-governmental organizations.

Learn more at www.mectizan.org.

About Merck

Today's Merck is a global healthcare leader working to help the world be well. Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to healthcare through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on **Twitter**, **Facebook** and **YouTube**.

Forward-Looking Statement

This news release includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of Merck's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. 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 pharmaceutical industry regulation and healthcare legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward healthcare cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; Merck'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 Merck's patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

Merck 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 Merck's 2013 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).

MerckJennifer Woodruff, 267-305-3550

text