Merck Statement on rVSV-EBOV (V920) Inclusion in Guinea Study

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KENILWORTH, N.J., March 13, 2015 – We are pleased to confirm that Merck, known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, and NewLink Genetics have been informed by the World Health Organization (WHO) that our Ebola vaccine candidate rVSV-EBOV has been selected as the vaccine that will be studied in the upcoming Phase III safety and effectiveness trial that will soon be initiated in Guinea. Along with WHO, other parties involved in the Guinea study include the Health Ministry of Guinea, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Epicentre and the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (NIPH).

This follows the recent initiation of the PREVAIL study being conducted through a collaboration between the governments of the United States (by investigators at the U.S. National Institutes of Health) and Liberia that is evaluating our vaccine candidate along with another investigational Ebola vaccine candidate. Both of these studies represent important steps forward in the developmental process for the rVSV-EBOV vaccine candidate.

The rVSV-EBOV vaccine candidate, originally developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada, is now being developed under an exclusive licensing and collaboration agreement between Merck and NewLink Genetics.

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.

About NewLink Genetics Corporation

NewLink is a biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering, developing and commercializing novel immuno-oncology products to improve treatment options for patients with cancer. NewLink's portfolio includes biologic and small molecule immunotherapy product candidates intended to treat a wide range of oncology indications. NewLink's product candidates are designed to harness multiple components of the immune system to combat cancer without significant incremental toxicity, either as a monotherapy or in combination with other treatment regimens. BioProtection Systems, a wholly-owned subsidiary of NewLink Genetics Corporation, is focused on the research, development and commercialization of vaccines. BPS is focused on control of emerging infectious diseases, including improvement of existing vaccines and providing rapid-response prophylactic and therapeutic treatment for pathogens most likely to enter the human population through pandemics or acts of bioterrorism. For more information please visit http://www.linkp.com.

Merck 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. 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 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 2014 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).

NewLink Genetics Corporation Forward-Looking Statement

This press release contains forward-looking statements of NewLink that involve substantial risks and uncertainties. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, contained in this press release are forward-looking statements, within the meaning of The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The words "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "expect," "intend," "may," "plan," "target," "potential," "will," "could," "should," "seek," or the negative of these terms or other similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. These forward-looking statements include, among others, statements regarding plans to develop and commercialize our product candidates and any other statements other than statements of historical fact. Actual results or events could differ materially from the plans, intentions and expectations disclosed in the forward-looking statements that NewLink makes due to a number of important factors, including those risks discussed in "Risk Factors" and elsewhere in NewLink's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the period ended December 31, 2013, and subsequent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The forward-looking statements in this press release represent NewLink's views as of the date of this press release. NewLink anticipates that subsequent events and developments will cause its views to change. However, while it may elect to update these forward-looking statements at some point in the future, it specifically disclaims any obligation to do so. You should, therefore, not rely on these forward-looking statements as representing NewLink's views as of any date subsequent to the date of this press release.

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