

SECOND HUNGARIAN BIOTECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

BUDAPEST, 23 MARCH 2006

The Hungarian Biotechnology Association (HBA) and the Hungarian Investment and Trade Development Agency (ITDH) organized a joint conference for the second time on 23 March 2006 in Budapest. Besides dealing with important questions related to the industry sector, the one-day event also covered the issues of grant opportunities, governmental subsidies, and the effects of the Innovation Act.

Based on the positive experience of their past collaboration, ITDH and HBA signed a Collaboration Agreement with the aim to improve the international reputation and position of Hungary's biotechnology sector, to increase its exports and facilitate the international utilization of Hungarian research and development achievements and their commercialization on international markets.

President of the Hungarian Biotechnology Association **Ernő Duda Jr.** opened the conference – presently the only great forum in Hungary that offers a chance for the representatives of companies active in biotechnology, the scientific sphere, investment firms and decision-makers of the governmental sector to meet. After underlining the importance of the conference itself, Mr. Duda emphasized in his speech *'It is essential that governmental decision-makers and scientists recognize the key role that lies in the utilization of Hungarian scientific achievements'*.

Deputy State Secretary for EU Development Funds of the Ministry of Economy and Transport **Géza Egyed** said *'From an economic strategic aspect one essential objective lies in the fact that the financial sources of the second National Development Plan should serve the development of a competitive knowledge economy in harmony with the Lisbon objectives. According to the plans set by the Ministry of Economy and Transport, a significant part of the EU money will finance activities related to R&D and innovation, as well as the adaptation of these. Therefore, biotechnology, pharmaceutical research and production – among other areas – also assume an important role'*.

ITDH's Business Development Director **Péter Spányik** commented on the Collaboration Agreement signed by ITDH and HBA *'For Hungary's competitiveness the export of life sciences developments and the related services is highly*

significant. Consequently, ITDH not only designs a separate program for the sector, but also represents Hungarian biotechnology with a united country stand at international fairs and exhibitions'. Mr. Spányik added that their grant scheme also allows for financing company presence at such events.

Upon signing the Collaboration Agreement Ernő Duda Jr. stated 'For the national biotechnology industry ITDH's support is essential, since it helps biotechnology assume a more and more dynamic presence on the international map of the sector – this facilitates and accelerates the development of business and professional relations and collaborations'.

President of the National Office for Research and Technology **Dr Miklós Boda** explained 'In the area of biotechnological research both Hungary and Europe have strong potentials, however, America seems to excel in terms of utilizing achievements. We should concentrate on tailoring future developments to meet not only national needs but also our presence on the global market'.

Speakers on behalf of the Ministry of Economy and Transport included Deputy State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Dr. Ábel Garamhegyi, Deputy State Secretary for EU Development Funds Géza Egyed and Head of Innovation Department Dr. Tamás Balogh.

During the biotechnology conference Biostatin Pharmaceutical Research and Development Ltd., Caprion Pharmaceuticals Inc. and ExperGen GmbH signed a trilateral license agreement concerning the pharmaceutical development of a novel therapeutic peptide. Based on Biostatin's pre-clinical and clinical trials the peptide is a potential blockbuster and will be suitable for the treatment of a variety of solid tumors.

Budapest, 23 March 2006

Further information:

ITDH, Katalin Kékesi

Tel: +36 1 472 8105

Further information is available at www.itd.hu and www.hungarianbiotech.org where presentations are also posted.