

Basel, 31 August 2000

Strengthening of Roche's oncology franchise

Roche acquires global rights for SmithKline Beecham's Kytril and strengthens its position as leading supplier of cancer therapies

Roche announced today that it has signed an agreement with SmithKline Beecham (SB) for Roche to acquire global rights to Kytril (granisetron hydrochloride), an antiemetic-drug used in chemotherapy. The divestiture requires the approval by the relevant authorities of SB's merger with Glaxo Wellcome including the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Kytril provides relief to cancer patients suffering from the severe and debilitating nausea and vomiting associated with chemotherapy. SB will, at the same time, acquire from Roche exclusive rights in the U.S. and Canada for Coreg (carvedilol), a drug for congestive heart failure and hypertension. Currently Coreg is co-promoted in the US by Roche and SB. Roche will remain the sole supplier of carvedilol in all markets outside North America.

The agreement marks another strategic move by Roche to focus on key therapeutic areas with high growth potential. The Kytril deal is valued at 1.23 billion US\$. This amount is reduced by the 400 million US\$ that SB pays to Roche for the Coreg rights. In 1999 Kytril achieved net sales of 550 million Swiss Francs. Thus Kytril significantly strengthens Roche's global oncology portfolio adding to such products as Herceptin (breast cancer), MabThera (Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma), NeoRecormon (anemia in cancer patients), Roferon-A (leukemia, Kaposi's sarcoma, malignant melanoma), Bondronat (tumour-induced hypercalcemia), Xeloda (breast cancer) and Furtulon (malignant tumours, only available in Japan). These medicines along with a number of diagnostics tests have made Roche one of the industry's most innovative and comprehensive companies in the field of oncology.

Kytril is well positioned as a highly efficacious and easy-to-administer 5-hydroxytryptamine (5HT₃) receptor antagonist and is available in injection and oral formulations. The product is also effective in the prevention and the treatment of radiotherapy-induced and post-operative nausea and vomiting and has already been approved for these two indications in certain markets.

Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Roche is one of the world's leading research-oriented healthcare groups in the fields of pharmaceuticals, diagnostics and vitamins. Roche's innovative products and services address prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases, thus enhancing people's well being and quality of life.

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