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## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON AGING (NIA) USA**

- Joint agreement for developing new pharmaceuticals such as an AIDS vaccine -

Effector Cell Institute (ECI) is pleased to announce acceptance of a request for joint research from the National Institute on Aging<sup>\*2</sup> (NIA), part of the USA National Institute of Health<sup>\*1</sup> (NIH), for the purpose of developing new pharmaceuticals centering mainly on an AIDS vaccine. This request was formally decided at a board meeting held today where a decision to enter into a joint research contract was reached.

### MEMO

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infects and multiplies within immune cells that protect the human body from disease, and ultimately causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) by drastically reducing certain lymphocyte types. Current treatment involves administering an AIDS vaccine intended to suppress growth of the HIV virus. This virus is capable of rapidly mutating within the body so that a drug-resistant virus re-appears immediately if only one drug is used. Current treatment methods therefore rely on multiple drugs such as reverse transcriptase inhibitor and protease inhibitor administered together as an AIDS cocktail. However this treatment method also has the problem that resistance to the drug will eventually occur. So a new pharmaceutical must be developed to prepare for the case where current medicines become totally ineffective.

ECI's technical level was assessed by the NIH after beginning joint research in April of this year to develop a DNA cancer vaccine and by other means. The goal of this new research will be completely different from the current treatment method; namely to develop a single potent drug capable of stopping the spread of HIV infection by controlling expression of the HIV genes. A contract for joint development of this drug has been signed. This technical fusion will hopefully prove useful in developing other new drug treatments such as for inflammatory diseases and allergies.

If the efficacy of a pharmaceutical developed by ECI is officially recognized, the NIA will grant rights to an international development application (joint application with NIA) for this new drug. During this joint research ECI will provide no funding to the NIA.

1. Description of the joint research

(1) Contract period: May 30, 2008 – May 29, 2012

(2) Research description: Development of new drugs for HIV, inflammation, and allergies

2. Effects on company business standing

This contract will exert no effects on company business result outlook in the current period and business results in the next fiscal year.

[Description of Terms]

\*1 National Institute of Health (NIH)

Largest medical research organization in the world (Approximately 18,000 researchers and employees and 2007 fiscal budget of approximately 3 trillion yen). The NIH was founded in Bethesda, Maryland USA in 1887 and currently consists of 27 research laboratories and research centers including the NIAID (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases) and the NIA, etc.

\*2 National Institute on Aging (NIA)

Research institute mainly involved with diseases related to aging including Alzheimer's, cancer, osteoporosis, arteriosclerosis, and hypertrophic arthritis. The NIA was founded in Baltimore, Maryland in 1974.

\*3 Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

Destroys the immune system within the human body so the body can no longer fight germs and diseases and therefore causes various diseases including candidiasis, pneumocystis carini, kaposi's sarcoma and dementia, etc.

(Contacts for inquiries or additional information)

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