

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Debiopharm Group and Moffitt Cancer Center  
Sign development and commercialisation agreement for small molecule  
Debio 0928 in early preclinical development for treatment of solid tumours  
- A novel drug with potential to block cancer cell proliferation -**

**Lausanne, Switzerland and Tampa, Florida, June 18, 2009** - Debiopharm Group (Debiopharm), a Swiss-based global biopharmaceutical group of companies with a focus on the development of prescription drugs that target unmet medical needs, and Moffitt Cancer Center (Moffitt), a non-profit Florida corporation, announce the signature of an exclusive license agreement for the development and commercialisation of Debio 0928, a small molecule in early preclinical development that inhibits the protein-protein interaction between Raf-1 (key signalling kinase in the MAP kinase pathway) and Rb (retinoblastoma protein). Rb acts as a barrier to cell division and proliferation. However, when Raf-1 physically interacts with Rb, it triggers a cascade of signals that eventually overcomes this barrier, thus inducing cellular proliferation. By preventing the interaction between Raf-1 and Rb and blocking the cell cycle, Debio 0928 creates a new strategy in the fight against cancer and is thus a potentially promising novel anti-tumour drug.

Under the terms of the agreement, Debiopharm shall pay Moffitt an up-front fee, as well as predefined advanced milestone payments during the development of Debio 0928. First entry of the product into man is expected for 2012.

“This discovery, made by the collaboration between Drs. Srikumar Chellappan, Saïd Sebti, and Nicholas Lawrence at Moffitt, is a novel approach to the treatment of cancer,” said Rolland-Yves Mauvernay, President and Founder of Debiopharm Group. “Being able to deactivate a key signalling kinase like Raf-1, known to be involved in many types of cancer, could open the door to more effective oncology treatments in the future.”

“The disruption of the binding of the tumour promoter Raf-1 to the tumour suppressor Rb with Debio 0928 is a novel, first-in-class therapeutic strategy that has the potential for targeting a wide spectrum of human cancers,” added Dr. Saïd Sebti, Chair, Department of Drug Discovery at Moffitt.

**About Debiopharm Group**

Debiopharm Group is a Swiss-based global biopharmaceutical group of companies with a focus on the development of prescription drugs that target unmet medical needs. The group in-licenses promising biological and small molecule drug candidates. It develops its products for global registration and maximum commercial potential. Once registered, the products are out-licensed to pharmaceutical partners for sales and marketing.

Debiopharm independently funds the worldwide development of all of its products while providing expertise in pre-clinical and clinical trials, manufacturing, drug delivery and formulation, and regulatory affairs.

Founded in 1979 and headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, Debiopharm has developed three products with global combined sales of \$2.6 billion in 2008.

For more information on Debiopharm Group, please visit: [www.debiopharm.com](http://www.debiopharm.com)

## **About H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute**

Located in Tampa, Florida, [Moffitt Cancer Center](#) is an [NCI](#) Comprehensive Cancer Center - a designation that recognises Moffitt's excellence in research and contributions to clinical trials, prevention and cancer control. Moffitt currently has 15 affiliates in Florida, one in Georgia and two in Puerto Rico. Additionally, Moffitt is a member of the [National Comprehensive Cancer Network](#), a prestigious alliance of the country's leading cancer centres, and is listed in [U.S. News & World Report](#) as one of "America's Best Hospitals" for cancer. Moffitt's sole mission is to contribute to the prevention and cure of cancer.

For more information on Moffitt Cancer Center, please visit: [www.moffitt.org](http://www.moffitt.org).

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