

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FEB 2007**

### **Hong Kong DNA Chips representatives attended WHO / ISIR / FIND Consultation on Diagnosis of H5N1 Avian Influenza Infections in Humans**

Prof. Albert C.H. Yu (Chairman and CEO of Hong Kong DNA Chips Ltd) and Dr Terence L.T. Lau (COO of Hong Kong DNA Chips Ltd) were invited to participate in the Consultation on Diagnosis of H5N1 Avian Influenza Infections in Humans, co-organized for the very first time by World Health Organization (WHO)/ International society for Influenza and other Respiratory Virus Disease (ISIRV) / Foundation For Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND), from 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2007 at WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland.

Over forty scientists, clinicians and industry representatives gather for this encompassing meeting at WHO Headquarters in Geneva to discuss and identify issues in diagnosis of H5N1 Avian Influenza infections in humans. The meeting covered a wide scope of objectives from defining the current diagnostic capabilities and technologies through to the role of regulatory and quality control environments along with its impact on the availability of diagnostics for H5N1.

HKDNA Chips and Beijing Hai Kang DNA Chips Ltd (wholly owned by HKDNA), represented separately by Professor Albert Yu and Dr. Terence Lau, were among only four corporations in the Asia Pacific region to be invited to attend this meeting (the other two came from Japan). Professor Yu and Dr Lau were among the twelve industry representatives invited to deliver technology presentations, reflecting the importance of our work on AIV diagnosis

In his presentation, Professor Yu discussed the application of *NASBA-EOC Mobile Test Module* in remote site testing and introduced the latest innovations in molecular diagnostics: ERT-PCR and the soon to be launched Lab-on-a-Chip (LOAC). Dr Lau delivered his presentation on NASBA (RNA based detection) platform technology for the diagnosis of Avian Influenza Virus, whilst highlighting its accompanying strong scientific data and the international recognition and validation NASBA has received to date.

The meeting concluded with the recognition of a pressing need for a WHO strategic plan that aims to strengthen laboratory testing, especially in those countries affected by Avian Influenza, and to provide clarity on use of point-of-care tests. It is also essential that WHO reinforces the importance of collecting clinical material from the field and delivering it to reference laboratories in order to evaluate, on a continuous basis, the ability of diagnostic tests to detect the current circulating strains. The meeting also underlined the need for an ongoing partnership between public and private sectors, and for international networking and sharing of information and material resources to contain Avian Influenza.

HKDNA started its works on bird flu since 2000 and is the first biotechnology company in Asia, to perform extensive research and development on bird flu testing. Moreover, on 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 2005, HKDNA had gained the approval by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF) on the very first commercial avian influenza virus (AIV) test kit, VDS H5 and VDS AIV. The approval acts as another landmark in HKDNA's successful development on bird

flu diagnostics. Such international recognition and endorsement demonstrates the quality of the company's work on Avian Influenza Virus.

HKDNA continues to contribute and support global collaborative efforts in the fight against Avian Influenza

Hong Kong DNA Chips Ltd is a biotechnology company, established in 1999, whose mission is to develop new biological products and new DNA techniques to serve the needs of society. The company's Scientific Advisory Board is comprised of renowned scientists who include two Nobel Laureates. By utilising the most advanced equipment and technology, we are able to provide exceptional biotechnology products to Hong Kong, Asia and the rest of the world. We are also the only company in Hong Kong with ISO9001 accreditation for parentage testing and HOKLAS (ISO/IEC 17025) accreditation for genetically modified food testing services.

Currently, the company is focusing on two main areas:

- research and development of DNA chips and novel genetic markers
- providing new and reliable DNA testing services, including DNA fingerprinting, genetically modified food testing and disease diagnosis.

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