

## Press Release

### **IAVI and CureVac Partner to Accelerate Development and Testing of AIDS Vaccine Candidates**

#### **Novel HIV immunogens to be delivered via novel mRNA platform**

**NEW YORK, USA, and TÜBINGEN, Germany, 10 September 2015** – The non-profit International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and biopharmaceutical company CureVac are partnering to accelerate the development of AIDS vaccines, utilizing novel immunogens developed by IAVI and partners, delivered via CureVac's novel messenger RNA (mRNA) technology.

HIV's envelope protein or "trimer" is the primary target for antibodies that can neutralize a wide range of the virus' strains, and which hold enormous promise in the quest for efficacious and broadly applicable AIDS vaccines. In a major breakthrough, researchers have recently designed immunogens that successfully mimic this trimer.

In this collaboration, IAVI has selected one of its leading HIV trimer constructs to launch the mRNA evaluation in small-scale clinical trials: mRNA that encodes for the chosen trimer mimic will be constructed using CureVac's RActive® technology and injected with the aim of stimulating the body to produce HIV trimer proteins and then related neutralizing antibodies. To date, most AIDS vaccine candidates have been based on DNA, viral vectors or protein. Using mRNA could accelerate the development and testing of AIDS vaccine candidates.

"This collaboration could be a real game-changer," said IAVI Chief Scientific Officer Wayne Koff. "The development of vaccines that can generate neutralizing antibodies against HIV is a top priority for IAVI and many other researchers. Researchers at IAVI's Neutralizing Antibody Center at The Scripps Research Institute and elsewhere have designed several novel immunogens that have the potential to elicit such antibodies. We are very hopeful that using mRNA will enable us to develop and test these immunogens comparatively quickly, saving both time and money."

"IAVI is an ideal partner to bring highly innovative HIV vaccine designs into human testing," said CureVac co-founder and CEO Ingmar Hoerr. "We are excited to benefit from IAVI's expertise in AIDS vaccine development, and its network and experience across the United States, Europe, Africa and India and to accelerate such development on the basis of our RActive® technology."

CureVac is pioneering the use of natural and chemically unmodified mRNA as a data carrier to instruct the human body to produce proteins capable of fighting a wide range of diseases. CureVac's mRNA-based vaccine candidates are also thermostable, which eliminates the need for cold-chain storage and infrastructure that pose a major challenge in vaccine supply in developing countries.

Under the terms of the agreement, IAVI will provide several stabilized HIV envelope trimer sequences, which CureVac will transfer into its RActive® technology for

preclinical and clinical development. The partners will work with U.S., German and African health authorities with an eye to initiating clinical trials in 2016.

### **About CureVac**

CureVac is the leading company in messenger RNA (mRNA) based drugs with more than 15 years of expertise and the most advanced and broadest preclinical and clinical pipeline in the industry. Until today CureVac received from dievini (Dietmar Hopp) and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation approx. \$220 million in equity investments.

Started in 2008 CureVac's mRNA products are subject of seven active clinical studies in more than 350 patients and healthy volunteers as of today, including a Phase IIb trial in prostate cancer. CureVac's mRNA technology is also the foundation for several high-profile partnerships involving multinational corporations and organizations, including agreements with Boehringer Ingelheim, Sanofi Pasteur, and Johnson & Johnson, as well as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

CureVac's proprietary technology platform utilizes natural, chemically unmodified mRNA, which studies have shown elicits greater therapeutic responses than chemically modified mRNA. CureVac's mRNA programs include novel mRNA-based cancer immunotherapies and prophylactic vaccines against infectious diseases (RNActive<sup>®</sup>), molecular therapies designed to trigger the body's own production of therapeutic proteins (RNArt<sup>®</sup>), and RNA encoded antibodies (RNAntibody<sup>®</sup>). In 2006, CureVac successfully established the first GMP facility worldwide for the manufacturing of mRNA. In 2016 CureVac will start the construction of an industrial scale production facility with a capacity of 30 million doses per year.

For more information, please visit [www.curevac.com](http://www.curevac.com).

### **About IAVI**

The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) is a global not-for-profit organization whose mission is to ensure the development of safe, effective, accessible, preventive HIV vaccines for use throughout the world. Founded in 1996, IAVI works with partners in 25 countries to research, design and develop AIDS vaccine candidates. The organization also conducts policy analysis and serves as an advocate for the AIDS vaccine field. It supports a comprehensive approach to addressing HIV and AIDS that balances the expansion and strengthening of existing HIV prevention and treatment programs with targeted investments in the design and development of new tools to prevent HIV. IAVI is dedicated to ensuring that a future AIDS vaccine will be available and accessible to all who need it. IAVI's work is made possible by generous support from many donors including: the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; Irish Aid; the Ministry of Finance of Japan in partnership with The World Bank; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands; the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD); the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The full list of IAVI donors is available at [www.iavi.org](http://www.iavi.org).

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