

Esperanza Medicines Foundation holds HIV/AIDS benefit concert

March 14, 2009 – Within the neo-gothic walls of the Elisabethenkirche in Basel, around 100 guests bestowed their support to help find affordable treatment for HIV/AIDS during a benefit concert hosted by Esperanza Medicines Foundation.

In 1982, the world saw an unprecedented crisis with the outbreak of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In a state of emergency, government officials, civil society, industry and scientists worked non-stop to find treatments to fight the disease. While patients in the industrialized world benefited from these treatments and were able to have an acceptable quality of life, it was not the case for developing countries.

Two and half decades later, more than 33 million people are still infected with HIV. According to the World Health Organization, 6800 people become infected with HIV and over 5700 die from AIDS each day, mostly because of inadequate access to HIV prevention and treatment services.

In addition, Sub-Saharan Africa remains the most seriously affected region with AIDS remaining the leading cause of death. Around 68% of adults and more than 90% of children living with HIV live in this region.

“Esperanza Medicines Foundation decided five years ago to take action and find new, alternative approaches to develop affordable treatments to combat HIV/ADS,” said Prof. Dr. Alex Matter, Chairman, CEO and Co-Founder of Esperanza Medicines Foundation.

As one of today’s leading scientists, Prof. Dr. Matter continues to play a key role in many important research programs, most notably in spearheading the early discovery of the breakthrough anti-cancer treatment Glivec. He also has a vast experience in researching treatments for HIV and other tropical diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria and dengue fever.

Esperanza is a Swiss-based foundation that hopes to make valuable contributions in non-profit research and development of safe, effective and affordable HIV/AIDS drug therapies that will be specifically designed to meet the unique needs and capabilities of developing countries. One of its missions is to use the strengths of developing countries based on their centuries-old knowledge in traditional medicine and the incredible bio-diversity of their countries.

“We have reached a new milestone with an emerging product pipeline and a precise idea of developing such products, including their production and marketing. We have a solid network in place, particularly in South Africa. We are also building on our new collaborations in Cameroon and Tanzania,” said Prof. Dr. Matter.

Esperanza believes that natural products native to developing countries can

yield alternative treatments that can be produced locally with relatively simple means at an affordable price and without the hurdles of patent protection and the use of sophisticated logistics.

“I hope that science will one day provide a definitive answer to HIV/AIDS and I think Esperanza is a brave attempt in this direction,” said Birgit Voigt, Economics Editor of NZZ am Sonntag.

[Transcript for Alex Matter's speech at the Fund Raising Concert](#)

Your contributions will be a valuable help in saving millions of lives by finding affordable treatments in combating HIV/AIDS. If you would like to donate, help or collaborate with Esperanza, please contact:

Esperanza Medicines Foundation
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