

Akzo Nobel reaches agreement on offer for Organon Teknika's diagnostics business

Arnhem, the Netherlands, April 23, 2001 – Akzo Nobel has signed an agreement accepting the offer for Organon Teknika's in vitro diagnostics business made by bioMérieux in February this year.

Akzo Nobel's Board of Management reached its decision taking into consideration the positive advice from the appropriate employee representative bodies within Akzo Nobel. "We are very pleased to announce that Organon Teknika's diagnostics business will be joining bioMérieux," commented Paul Brons, member of Akzo Nobel's Board of Management responsible for the Pharma Group. "This is a good deal for all," he said.

"Organon Teknika's diagnostics business has over the years established strong worldwide positions for several specialized innovative diagnostic product lines through its committed R&D efforts. However, it missed the critical mass in R&D and international marketing to be able to establish a leading overall position for itself in a strongly consolidating global diagnostics market. As part of bioMérieux – a renowned innovative player and the No. 8 diagnostics company in the world – it will enjoy all the benefits that critical mass brings. This puts the future of the business and that of its employees on a solid footing," remarked Paul Brons. "For bioMérieux this is an attractive deal as they are acquiring a company that has a similar R&D driven approach and whose products offer a good fit with its own product lines", he explained.

"The deal also allows Akzo Nobel to realize its Pharma strategy of growing businesses strongly focused on human healthcare, animal healthcare and biopharmaceutical production," added Mr. Brons.

Organon Teknika's pharmaceuticals business and staff (400 employees), which are not covered by the deal, will be transferred to and further strengthen Organon, the Pharma Group's human healthcare business.

The transaction is subject to the usual conditions, including appropriate regulatory clearances in several countries. The deal will be closed as soon as possible after the necessary approvals have been obtained.

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Note for the editor

Organon Teknika, headquartered in Boxtel, the Netherlands, specializes in the R&D, manufacturing and marketing of advanced systems and products for hospitals, laboratories and blood banks. The company currently employs around 2,200 people and is active in more than 60 countries.

Organon Teknika is a business unit of Akzo Nobel. Akzo Nobel, based in the Netherlands, serves customers throughout the world with healthcare products, coatings and chemicals. Consolidated sales for 2000 totaled EUR 14 billion (USD 13 billion, GBP 8.5 billion). The Company employs approximately 68,000 people in 75 countries. Financial results for the first quarter of 2001 will be announced on April 25, 2001.

BioMérieux is the in vitro diagnostics branch of the French healthcare group bioMérieux-Pierre Fabre. bioMérieux's products are used for medical diagnosis, but also for quality control of food, cosmetics and therapeutics, and for environmental testing. In 2000 bioMérieux's sales were approximately EUR 592 million (FRF 3.9 billion), making it the eighth largest in vitro diagnostics company in the world.

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