

Akzo Nobel receives offer for Organon Teknika's diagnostics business

Arnhem, the Netherlands, February 14, 2001 – Akzo Nobel announces that it has received an offer from bioMérieux S.A. for Organon Teknika's in vitro diagnostics business.

Organon Teknika's diagnostics business has successfully developed a strong worldwide position for specific diagnostic product lines and services, based on its own, specialized R&D capabilities. However, given the strong consolidation in the highly competitive diagnostics market, the company has been actively looking for ways of broadening its competitive basis and increasing critical mass in both R&D and international marketing.

"The Board of Management will review the offer, which appears to be attractive and in line with the strategy of our Pharma Group. bioMérieux S.A., part of the bioMérieux-Pierre Fabre group, is a well known and also strongly innovative player in the diagnostic field, and appears to offer a good fit with Organon Teknika's diagnostics business", an Akzo Nobel spokesman said, adding that the two companies had successfully worked together before, in North America.

Employee representative bodies and unions have been informed about the offer and consultation procedures will commence shortly, where applicable. The required regulatory approvals will be sought as and when appropriate.

Akzo Nobel is being advised by Deutsche Bank.

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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 will total some EUR 14 billion (USD 13 billion, GBP 8.5 billion). The Company currently employs 68,000 people in 75 countries. Financial results for the year 2000 will be announced on February 23, 2001.

bioMérieux S.A., which has its headquarters near Lyon, France, is an in vitro diagnostics company that focuses on infectious disease. bioMérieux's products are used for medical diagnosis, but also for quality control of food, cosmetics and therapeutics, and for environmental testing. In 1999 bioMérieux's sales were approximately EUR 518 million (FRF 3.4 billion), making it the eighth largest in vitro diagnostics company in the world.

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