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## **Roche acquires Mirus to advance research in the field of RNAi delivery**

MADISON, WI, USA – Mirus Bio Corporation and Roche (Basel, Switzerland) announced today that they have entered into a definitive agreement under which Roche will acquire Mirus Bio Corporation, a privately-owned US company based in Madison, Wisconsin, that focuses on the discovery and development of innovative nucleic acid based technologies, including a proprietary RNAi (Ribonucleic Acid interference) delivery platform.

RNAi – a natural mechanism that the body uses to ‘silence’ certain genes – represents a potential whole new class of therapeutics for difficult to treat diseases. The major challenge of this promising technology has so far been the transport of RNAi molecules into the target cell. Mirus’ delivery platform provides an innovative way of effectively getting RNAi therapeutics to specific disease targets.

Roche’s mission is to find novel solutions for patients who suffer from difficult to treat diseases. RNAi therapeutics provides the capabilities to target complex diseases such as cancer, respiratory or metabolic disorders. In 2007, Roche already announced a major alliance with the US-based company Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, Inc., which included the acquisition of Alnylam’s European research site located in Kulmbach, Germany. This is now Roche’s established Centre of Excellence for RNAi therapeutic research.

“The pioneering work in RNAi delivery by the scientists at Mirus, together with our Centre of Excellence for RNAi research in Kulmbach, puts Roche at the forefront of bringing this whole new class of treatment to patients who suffer from difficult to treat diseases,” said Lee E. Babiss, Global Head of Roche Pharma Research. “Our global research team has made great strides in advancing RNAi therapeutics, and with our new colleagues in Madison we will now bolster those efforts. The technology brought by Mirus, together with additional technologies, will bring us closer to creating fully enabled RNAi therapeutics.”

“The expertise, resources and commitment that Roche brings to the RNAi field make Roche an ideal partner for Mirus,” said Russell R. Smestad, President of Mirus. “Together we will be able to greatly accelerate the progress we would have accomplished independently.”

Under the terms of the agreement, Roche will fully acquire Mirus for USD 125 million and will maintain an RNAi research site in Madison. Mirus’ transfection reagents business will be divested into a standalone business to be known as Mirus Bio LLC, without any anticipated effect on existing customers. Employees will be offered a transition into their respective business unit. Closing of the transaction is subject to standard conditions. Completion is expected during the second half of 2008. Advisors to Mirus for this transaction were JMP Securities LLC and Quarles & Brady LLP.

### **About RNAi**

RNAi (RNA interference) is a revolution in biology, representing a breakthrough in understanding how genes are turned on and off in cells. Its discovery was awarded the Nobel Prize in October 2006. By harnessing the natural biological process of RNAi occurring in our cells, the creation of a major new class of medicines, known as RNAi therapeutics, is on the horizon. RNAi therapeutics targets the cause of diseases by potently silencing specific messenger RNAs (mRNAs), thereby preventing disease-causing proteins from being made. RNAi therapeutics has the potential to treat disease and help patients in a fundamentally new way.

### **About Mirus Bio Corporation**

Mirus Bio Corporation is a leader in the fields of RNA interference and gene therapy, based upon its expertise in nucleic acid chemistry and delivery. The company’s Dynamic PolyConjugates™ technology is being refined as an enabling platform for siRNA therapeutics. In gene therapy, the company is developing novel human therapeutics enabled by its proprietary Pathway IV™ hydrodynamic delivery platform. The lead program is a treatment for Muscular Dystrophy, which is being developed collaboratively with Transgene S.A. of Strasbourg, France. Finally, the company currently markets state-of-the-art DNA and siRNA transfection and labeling products to researchers worldwide. Additional information is available at [www.mirusbio.com](http://www.mirusbio.com).

### **About Roche**

Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Roche is one of the world’s leading research-focused healthcare groups in the fields of pharmaceuticals and diagnostics. As the world’s biggest biotech company and an

innovator of products and services for the early detection, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases, the Group contributes on a broad range of fronts to improving people's health and quality of life. Roche is the world leader in in-vitro diagnostics and drugs for cancer and transplantation, and is a market leader in virology. It is also active in other major therapeutic areas such as autoimmune diseases, inflammatory and metabolic disorders and diseases of the central nervous system. In 2007 sales by the Pharmaceuticals Division totaled 36.8 billion Swiss francs, and the Diagnostics Division posted sales of 9.3 billion francs. Roche has R&D agreements and strategic alliances with numerous partners, including majority ownership interests in Genentech and Chugai, and invested over 8 billion Swiss francs in R&D in 2007. Worldwide, the Group employs about 79,000 people. Additional information is available on the Internet at [www.roche.com](http://www.roche.com).

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